

# *Holdrege Middle School*

## *October 2007*

### *Children – Our Community's Investment*

[www.thedusters.org](http://www.thedusters.org) Russ Baker, Principal P.O. Box 2002 • Holdrege • Nebraska • 68949-2002

#### From the Principal's Desk

The school information program that we use is called Infinite Campus. There is a parent information system included in this program. On this information system you will be able to check your child's grades and their attendance. Parents that do not have a password to the information system may call me at the school at 995-5421 to receive one. Parents are welcome to come into my office and have an account set up in person. The portal to the information system is on our home page at [www.thedusters.org](http://www.thedusters.org).

#### Parent/Teacher Conferences

Fall parent/teacher conferences will be held on October 8<sup>th</sup> from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and on October 11<sup>th</sup> from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. On the 11<sup>th</sup> the teachers will have an in-service in the morning and conferences in the afternoon. **Students will not have school on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of October.** The teams will be sending out a sign-up sheet for conferences so you can schedule a convenient time to visit about your son or daughter. These conferences are very important for teachers and parents to engage in beneficial conversations about your son or daughter. The conferences in the spring will be student-led conferences with the students leading the conferences instead of the teachers.

#### Fall Break

There will be no school on Friday, October 26<sup>th</sup>.

#### Lunch Program

It is important to note that students who are on free and reduced lunch do not receive free seconds. They need to pay for those seconds, thirds, and so on. It really helps the school if we keep the students' lunch balances in the positive instead of the negative. Once a student gets below \$0 in their account, they will not be able to get a main dish but instead will be allowed to have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and milk. A limit of 5 times will be allowed throughout the school year.

#### School Safety

In the interest of safety for your child walking to school, please remind them to use the crosswalks where we have adults monitoring the streets. When you drive to school, be alert for students walking to school, as they sometimes do not watch what they are doing when going across the street.

Holdrege Middle School has a safety plan that is in place for all emergencies. In the event of an emergency it is important that you observe the following procedures:

- Do **not** telephone the school. We understand and respect your concern, but it is essential that the telephone system be available for emergency communications.
- Tune your radio to **1380 AM (KUVR)** for emergency announcements and status reports. You will also receive instructions on where you should go and how/when you may pick up your student. Connect Ed. will be used to contact parents in emergency situations.

- Do **not** come to the school until instructed to do so. It may be necessary to keep the streets and parking lots clear for emergency vehicles. If evacuation is required, students may be transported or walked to a location away from school. You will be notified of this through the media bulletins.
- Talk to your students and emphasize how important it is for them to follow instructions from their teachers and school officials during any emergency.
- Carefully read all information you receive from the school. You may receive updates about our safety procedures from time to time.

### 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.** 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.

### Activities

The high school and middle school have begun their sports schedules. We encourage students to participate in these activities whenever possible. Research tells us that students who are involved are more likely to be successful in the classroom. However, we need to remember that the participation in activities is a privilege and not a right. We expect all of our students who are involved in activities to maintain their grades first and to be held to a higher standard of citizenship because of their visibility.

Students may purchase an activity card in the office for \$25. This will allow your student to attend any school activity held in Holdrege except for certain tournaments. This pass is good for the whole year. If your child goes to several activities during the year, this is a great bargain.

I would appreciate it if you would talk to your children about their behavior at the games. We would like students to come to the games to support the teams playing. We do not, however, want them to come to the games and run around all of the time. For the safety of your child, we will not allow this type of behavior or the playing of street-yard football games on the side of the stadium. Students who do not follow the guidelines of the school will be asked to leave the premises.

### Help your students be successful

Research shows that there are several things you can do to help your child be successful in school. Here are a few of the most important ones that can be done at home:

- Make sure that your child gets something to eat before he or she leaves for school or have them eat at the breakfast program at school.
- A quiet place to study at home.
- All students have a planner. Check it every night to see what homework is due the next day.
- Make homework a priority.
- Reading makes the brain work harder than sitting in front of the TV.
- Emphasize education, and how it opens doors for the future.

### Personal Property

When students bring personal property to school, it is the responsibility of the student to make sure that their property is secure. When property is taken, I will try to investigate as to what happened to it, but it is difficult to investigate these types of matters. It makes it easier on the school, and the student, if valuables are left at home. Things that are taken to school that are costly, like bicycles, should have a lock on them.

### Connect Ed.

Connect Ed is the new computerized telephone service of the district. I will be using this service to contact parents about important events, low lunch balances, and emergency situations

### Voice Mail

We have voice mail at Holdrege Public Schools now. When you call the school, you may get a recording. Follow the commands as to whom you would like to leave a message for.

### Phone Usage

Phone use at school for students is limited to emergency use or for students to call parents if they have to stay after school. If a student has to stay after school, they will call from the teacher's room where they are staying.

### Retakes and 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Pictures

The Lifetouch photographer will be here this Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, to do retakes and 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade class pictures. Students wanting retakes need to return their original picture packet to the photographer. Students who missed the original picture day may come to the office for an order envelope. 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade students have been given order envelopes for class pictures. If they need another one, please have them stop in the office.

### From the Physical Education Department

#### FITNESS PLEDGE

I pledge my body to exercise, to make me physically fit & mentally wise.

I promise to be active 20 minutes a day.

Run, hop, skip, jump, bike or play.

Because when I move I feel good and strong.

I know this will help me live healthy & long!

Physical Education is a very important part of our lives when childhood obesity is on the rise. We at the Holdrege Middle School want to live by the Fitness Pledge. If your son or daughter is unable to participate, we would appreciate a note from home or the doctor as to what they are not allowed to do and for how long. In this day of health rehab, there are many activities students can be working on during class time without sitting out completely. We want to encourage students to stay involved as much as possible. Our life depends on it. - Ms. Balcom, Holdrege M.S. Physical Ed.

### Title 1

The Title 1 program provides an "extra boost" for regular classroom reading and math students in grades 5 and 6. Mrs. Shield is the teacher for this federally funded government program that assists students in addition to their regular classroom instruction. Students qualify for this program based on test scores, report card grades, and teacher/parent recommendations. In September, a letter was mailed to the parents of students who qualified for the program. (Please remember to send the green authorization form back to school). During the school year, if you think your child may need an "extra boost" in math and/or reading, please call Mrs. Shield at the Middle School.

## From the Counselor's Corner

Welcome to all new and returning students and their parents to HMS! I am the guidance counselor here at HMS! If you have any questions, concerns or anything that you feel you need to communicate to me in regard to how your child is doing, feel free to contact me. Here are some situations that are helpful for me to know so I can help the student: A student may be having difficulty with peers, a stressful situation at school or home, a personal illness or a family member who is ill, a death in the family etc. This can be important information that I would be willing to inform their teachers of, if you would want me to share this with them. Sometimes this helps the individual student to better function in the classroom if their teachers know about the situation. We can better help and understand the student. If a student needs to talk, I work with them one on one. I am starting to organize small groups during lunch time. We eat together and talk about various topics. I will be starting some friendship groups in the 5th and 6th grade and teen talk groups in the 7th and 8th grade. I go into the classroom and do classroom guidance activities with all the students. I am also teaching a quarter Career class to all 8th grade students. I love my job because no two days are alike! I enjoy getting to know the students! ☺

This year I have chosen the theme of: **"Let's Hear it for the T.E.A.M. – Together Everyone Achieves More!** This year we want all the students to know that they are a part of a homeroom team as well as a big team working together to achieve more here at HMS! A team meaning not just being involved in sports but also being a part of the band, music/chorus, clubs - each class here at school is a team! I am hoping all students learn what it means to be a part of a team. I visited all the classrooms at the beginning of the year and asked the students, "What does being a part of a team mean?" Here is what they came up with: The importance of working together, cooperating in a group, communicating with each other, asking questions, and working hard so you don't let the team down. The students also stressed the importance of respecting and encouraging each other, putting forth effort, and not giving up when the going gets tough. Always striving to do their very best! Yes! That's what T.E.A.M. is all about! The word of the year "SYNERGY" – the combined action of individuals, producing a greater effect than the sum of the various individual actions. You as parents are a big part of our T.E.A.M..... STUDENTS + TEACHERS + PARENTS = TEAMWORK! I am looking forward to a great school year!

The following are the Boys & Girls Town Social Skills that have been taught and reviewed with all of our students so far this year. Greeting Others, Introducing Yourself, Hallway Behavior, Formal and Informal Lines, Following Instructions, M.Y.O.B.- Mind Your Own Business, Getting the Teacher's Attention, Accepting "NO" for an answer and Accepting Criticism or a Consequence, Talking With Others, Making a Request, Making an Apology, and Accepting an Apology.

- Mrs. Berreckman or "Mrs. B." ☺

**STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS:** Great job to all students who ran for Student Council this year. These students need to be commended for all their hard work. They campaigned the week of September 10th – 14th. Their signs and slogans were awesome! The students did an excellent job on their speeches on Friday, September 14th. They are all winners in my eyes! A total of 90 students ran for Student Council – 22 students from the 5th grade, 35 students from the 6th grade, 14 students from the 7th grade and 19 students from the 8th grade. This shows me that students want to be involved and want to help our school to be even a better place. Here are the results of the 2007-08 election:

### 5th Grade:

Mrs. Grimm – Jenna Gillespie and McKenzie Ironshell  
Mr. Mattson – Isaac Hohman and Sydnee McMinamen  
Ms. Wagoner – Janessa Maurer and Chase Hasty

Mrs. Uribe – Joseph Anderson and Andrea Exstrom

**6th Grade:**

Mr. Evans – Jamie Bialas and Walker Hohensee  
Mr. Hudson – Megan Hunke and Braden Badertscher  
Mrs. Schneider – Hannah Hale and Jamie Isaacson  
Mrs. Wells – Morgan Hamling and Sarah Vonasek

**7th Grade:**

Mrs. Brewer – Austin Pistulka and Justin Ropers  
Mrs. Feuhrer – Maggie Nelson and Mackenzie Jensen  
Mr. Hild – Rebekah Bauman and Reyna Smith  
Mrs. Lum – Bailey Williams and Rachel Huston

**8th Grade:**

Mrs. Anderson – Tanner Hueftle and Erwin Solorio  
Mrs. Hartzog – Dillon Clayton and Max Townsend  
Mr. Komenda – Chelsie Morten and Joe Burr  
Mr. Ott – Kelsey Stevenson and Rachel Berreckman

**ATTENTION PARENTS!!!!!!** There has been an interest in getting a parents organization started here at HMS!  
Holdrege Middle School parents: You are all invited to our first Middle School Parent Association or "MSPA" on  
Monday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, in our media center at 7:30 P.M. Come find out how you can help out and be involved  
here at HMS! We have some ideas and we would like to hear your ideas! Refreshments will be provided! 😊

# Help our School!

In this day of ever increasing costs and decreasing budgets, there are four easy ways that you can help our students through programs offered through the Holdrege Middle School Media Center:



## Labels for Education

Save the labels from any Campbell's, SpaghettiOs, Pepperidge Farm, Swanson, Prego, or Franco American products, and the plastic caps from V8 juices. The points acquired from collecting these labels can be used to order merchandise for our school. There is a collection box in the Media Center where you can drop off your labels.

## Our Family Labels for Learning

Bring in the labels from any Our Family products and help us earn money for needed materials. Our Family Labels for Learning will donate \$.05 for every Our Family UPC barcode turned in. For example, for every 500 labels sent in, we can receive \$25.00 for purchasing educational materials.



## Recycle Printer Cartridges

Used printer cartridges from your home or business can be brought to the HMS Media Center. With cash earned through the recycling of used laser jet and ink jet cartridges, we purchase Accelerated Reader tests as well as other items.

## Scholastic Book Fair

The Scholastic book fair will be coming to HMS this fall, November 12-16, 2007, and again in the spring. The Media Center receives a percentage of the money from all items sold during the book fair. This money is used to purchase new books for our Media Center.



Ask your friends, family and neighbors to save item for us. Encourage them to do some early Christmas shopping at the book fair. If you have any questions, contact Mrs. Bricker at the Middle School. Thanks in advance for your support!