

Holdrege Middle School

August 2011

Empowering Students for Success

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

August 3, 2011

Dear Students and Parents,

We have an outstanding school here at Holdrege Middle School. We have outstanding community support and dedicated professionals that work for the school district. The upcoming weeks will be busy as we prepare to welcome our new fifth grade class and the returning students from the sixth, seventh and eighth grades.

I am looking forward to meeting all of the students and parents of the district as the year gets under way. The relationship that we build between the parents and the staff of the middle school is very important to the success of the students here at Holdrege Middle School. Please feel free to contact us at the school should you have any questions at all. Working together we can make this an outstanding school year for your student and you.

Of special note this year, our school improvement plan is to focus on improving reading skills for all students. We will be having workshops at the beginning of the year for teachers, to concentrate on how all teachers can become proponents of helping students become effective in their reading skills regardless of what subject they teach.

Newsletter

The hardcopy of this first newsletter is the only newsletter that we send out in the mail. If you have given us your email in the past we will email you the newsletter. If you have not given us your email and would like the newsletter emailed to you please call the school at 995-5421. If we do not have an email to send the email to we will send the newsletter home with your child.

Picking up and dropping off of students

The circle drive on the south side of the school is a bus pick up area and will remain a fire lane access area. **There will be no pick up or drop off in this area.** (This will lead to a safer route for students leaving the building, as they will have a direct route to the crosswalk without traffic going though the circle drive). The east side of the building and The Tassel parking lot across the street will be designated for student pick up and drop off. The east side of the building will have two lanes. The inside lane will be for drop off and pick up. The outside lane will be for through traffic to go to the east parking lot. When you drive though the pick up lane, if your child is there you may stop and pick them up. If they are not there you will need to drive around and park in the parking lot. **Parents will not be allowed to park their cars in the pick up area to wait for their child.** For the system to work smoothly, it is important that parents do not sit in the pick up lane waiting for their child as this will back up traffic. When you park in the lot please park on the south side of the lot next to the grass or in the middle stalls. We will instruct students at the

school to walk down the grassy area to your car or across the designated crosswalk to go to the middle stalls. It is important to note that the purpose of this is to encourage students to walk and ride their bicycle to and from school. The building opens at 7:30 for students in the morning so you may drop them off at any time from 7:30 to 7:55 in the morning. The busiest time that parents drop students off at is 7:45 to 7:55. If you do not want to wait in line, dropping your child off at 7:30 to 7:45 is not as busy. We also start serving breakfast in the middle school commons at 7:30.

Cell Phones and Dress Code

Cell phones have become an increasingly difficult problem in public schools. At the middle school we would prefer that students not bring them to school. If a student does need to bring a cell phone with them to school they need to be turned off and put in their locker until after school is out. With the problems of today that include sexting and cyber bullying, cell phones have brought issues to the public schools that we have to deal with that are not in the best interest of our educational goals. If there is reason to believe that these types of crimes are being committed on cell phones, the phones will be confiscated and turned over to the police. The first time a student is found to have a phone in their possession during the school day, the parents will have to come and get the phone from the office. The second offense will result in the phone being kept until the end of the year where they can pick it up at the office.

When buying school clothes for your child, remember that we do not allow bare shoulders, bare stomachs, dresses or shorts that are shorter than the tips of their fingers, clothes that have obscenities written on them or clothes that promote drugs and alcohol. We seem to have the biggest problem with girls wearing shorts that are too short. Please make sure that your child has the proper attire on before they leave for school so that we do not have to send them home to change.

Activity Ticket

Seventh and eighth graders who go out for an athletic team will need to purchase an activity ticket. Activity tickets are \$25. Students who qualify for free and reduced lunches can have that fee waived by turning in the waiver for student fees form included in this mailing.

PaySchool

Holdrege Public Schools has partnered with PaySchool to provide online payment of various school fees. Patrons will have the opportunity to pay lunch, activity ticket and participation fees online beginning this fall. To use the service, an Infinite Campus account is needed to access the parent portal at <https://campus.holdregeholders.org/campus/portal/holdrege.jsp>. To get a parent account or get a new password, please call the middle school. An account will also need to be set up with PaySchool. Users can then pay online using credit cards or electronic bank accounts. Payments for other fees will be available later on in the year. Registration details and instructions will be included on the Infinite Campus portal site. **If you do not have an infinite campus password please call or come into the middle school office to set up an account.**

Odds and Ends

I have included other information in the newsletter to help you prepare for the upcoming year. We have a great staff here at Holdrege Middle School that cares about the type of education your child receives. The attitude of having a very caring environment for your middle school child will be a high priority of all of the staff here at Holdrege Middle School. I look forward to meeting all of you in the upcoming weeks.

IMPORTANT DATES AND TIMES:

August 15th – 19th – Holdrege Middle School offices open and new student registration (Students that are new to the district.) Please call Mrs. Berreckman to set up an appointment.

August 17th - Staff reports for pre-opening workshops.

August 22nd - Student Orientation (1:00 P.M. - 5th and 6th grade; 2:00 P.M. – 7th and 8th grade). The school handbook, schedules, and other information will be available at this time.

August 23rd – School begins at 8:00 A.M. and dismisses on a Friday schedule (1:30 P.M.).

August 26th – School pictures taken.

August 30th – Holdrege Middle School Open House at 7:00 P.M.

September 5th – Labor Day –NO SCHOOL

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS IN THIS MAILING:

FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH FORMS – Please fill out one form per family, listing children in all of the Holdrege Schools. Return as soon as possible to central office if you wish to qualify for the first meal. Students qualifying for free or reduced price lunches will also qualify for the breakfast program. Students who qualify for free/reduced price meals will also qualify for other programs (free activity ticket, free assignment notebook, etc.) by completing the fee waiver form included in this mailing. **(Please return lunch form applications as soon as you get this mailing).**

SUPPLIES LIST – Students will be able to determine what supplies are needed for each grade. The assignment books may be purchased in the homerooms during orientation for \$5.00. The assignment book also contains the school handbook and passes.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE BEGINNING OF SCHOOL:

CENSUS INFORMATION: A census sheet will be sent home with each student for you to complete. This sheet will be sent home at orientation. We would like them returned to homeroom teachers the following day.

HEALTH INFORMATION – A health information sheet will be sent home with each student for you to complete. This sheet will also be sent home at orientation. We would like them returned to homeroom teachers the following day.

INSURANCE FORMS: Insurance forms will be sent home with students at orientation. If you are interested in purchasing this insurance, fill out the form and return it to the school office.

STUDENT ORIENTATION: Orientation sessions for all Holdrege Middle School students will be held on Tuesday, August 23rd. 5th and 6th grade students should report to the Middle School at 1:00 p.m., and 7th

and 8th graders should report at 2:00 p.m. The sessions will be held in the gym and last approximately 45 minutes. Students will receive information regarding the upcoming school year, including schedules and calendars, and may purchase their assignment books in their homerooms during this time. Students may also come to the office to put money in lunch accounts. It is easiest to pay by check, including the student's lunch account number in the memo portion of the check. Lunch numbers will remain the same as they were last year.

EARLY DISMISSAL: We will be on a 1:30 dismissal August 23rd- 26th. If excessive heat occurs in weeks following, other dismissal information will be made available through regular channels as they become necessary.

LUNCH ITEMS: The lunch program is being managed by Creative Dining Services. We are looking forward to them being our partner again this year. Lunch will be \$2.45 per meal for students. Breakfast prices are \$1.30. **It is important that all checks for the lunch program be separate from other purchases made at school. Lunch money will be accounted for entirely separate from other monies.** You can monitor your child's lunch account on the Infinite Campus account for your child. The lunch program does sell extras, so be aware if your child is buying ice cream or Gatorade, their lunch money will not go as far. More information on the lunch program will follow.

BOOK BAGS: Book bags will not be used during the school day except to carry books to and from home. All book bags are to be kept in the student's locker. Students will have plenty of room for their book bags and coats in these lockers. To keep the lockers in good shape students will not be allowed to glue, tape, or attach objects inside their lockers. **Lockers are school property and can be searched at any time.**

SCHOOL PICTURES: School pictures will be taken on Friday, August 26th. Forms will be sent home with students the first day of school that will explain the different types of picture packages available. Students should bring their picture envelope and money on the 26th to give to the photographer. Visit Lifetouch.com for clothing suggestions, online payment details and more.

PHYSICAL CARDS: Students, grades 7th and 8th only, planning to participate in fall sports, must have a physical before they will be allowed to practice or play. Be sure to get your physicals completed as soon as possible! **Reminder – ALL seventh grade students need to have a physical and are to bring their physical forms to their homeroom teacher.** Local physicians have school physical cards.

IMMUNIZATIONS: Just a reminder that students are to be up to date on the immunization records. The school nurse has sent out reminders of what students need updated. The state law tells us that any student who is not up to date on their immunizations will not be allowed to begin school.

STUDENT ABSENCES: If your child is absent on any day, please call the school office before 8:00 a.m. to inform us of the absence. If you know ahead of time that your child will be absent, please send a note to school with your child. The note should be shown to each of your child's teachers and then brought to the office. A parent or guardian may call or send a note to the office when the student is tardy.

ACTIVITY TICKETS: Activity tickets are available to all Holdrege Middle School students for \$25. **(Please keep these checks separate from other monies). If your child is planning on participating in any after school athletic program, they will be required to purchase an activity ticket. For example, if they are just planning on going out for basketball they should purchase one in the fall so they can**

have it for the whole year as opposed to just having it during basketball season. The activity tickets will admit you to all home Holdrege High School and Holdrege Middle School contests with the exception of any conference, district, or state contests that we may host. The tickets may be purchased in the Holdrege Middle School Office. Adult season tickets are sold at the high school.

SCHOOL CALENDARS: School calendars will be distributed to all students during the orientation process. We do have a limited number of extra calendars available for parents or community members. If you would like one, please feel free to stop by the school office to pick one up.

Lunch Times:

Regular Lunch Times

5 th Grade	11:25-12:00
6 th Grade	11:40-12:10
8 th Grade	12:06-12:36
7 th Grade	12:21-12:51

Friday Lunch Times

5 th Grade	11:10-11:40
6 th Grade	11:20-11:50
8 th Grade	11:40-12:10
7 th Grade	11:55-12:25

Sincerely,

Russell S. Baker
Holdrege Middle School Principal

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