

# MUSTANG ACTIVITIES NEWSLETTER

FROM THE DESK OF MR. LUFT



## TRIVIA NIGHT COMING

Don't miss out on the Second Annual Mustang Trivia Night! Tables are going fast—only about 8 are left—so be sure to secure yours soon. The event will take place on Friday, February 21st, at 6:00 PM, with doors opening at 5:00 PM. Gather your team for a fun evening of trivia, community, and friendly competition! For more information or to reserve your table, email [Martin.Luft@dmschools.org](mailto:Martin.Luft@dmschools.org).



## LEGO LEAGUE

Mustang Robotics (Henry, Xander, Venture, Fritz, Dane, Fisher) did a great job on making their robot run smoothly and consistently.

The Thinkers (Emmet, Ruth, Sam, Ben, George, Arlo, Quinn, Jeriah, Liam) won the Rising All-Star award. This award celebrates a team that the judges notice and expect great things from in the future. Their presentation on the research is excellent

## THINGS THAT ARE STARTING

Boys 8th Grade Basketball  
Math Explorations Club  
Coding Club



## LEGO LEAGUE



## THINGS THAT ENDED

Lego League  
Girls Basketball  
Mock Trial  
Kick Ball Club  
Principals Running Club



# GIRLS BASKETBALL



## GIRLS BASKETBALL



## THE SEASON

The Merrill Mustangs girls' basketball season has come to an end, with the White Team finishing with a record of 2-7 and the Blue Team achieving an impressive 5-2 record. Despite their challenges, the Mustangs demonstrated resilience and growth throughout the season, especially considering that the majority of the team consisted of 7th graders competing against primarily 8th-grade opponents. Looking ahead, the girls are excited to return next year as 8th graders, eager to build on their experiences and turn the tide for an even more successful season. The future is bright for this determined group of athletes!

## We played at the WELL

On November 22nd, the Merrill girls' basketball team had the incredible opportunity to play before the Iowa Wolves game and scrimmage the McCombs Eagles during halftime at the Wells Fargo Arena. It was a fantastic evening, showcasing the hard work and talent of our athletes in front of a large audience. This once-in-a-lifetime experience created unforgettable memories for the girls and highlighted the strength and spirit of Mustang basketball.



## AWARDS

Tara Gardoud: Hustle  
Adelle Van Vleet: MVP  
Kamora Williams:  
Perseverance  
Dalia Bol: Best Free Throw %  
Emma Howard: Team Player  
Maggie Luft: Hustle  
Kennedy Dales: Most Improved  
Kennedy Simmons: Defense  
Maleah Foy: MVP

## COACHES





# mock trial recap

December 2024

## We started with 8

### The Beginning

The Mock Trial program at Merrill kicked off the year with an exciting meeting led by former Merrill parent and outstanding attorney Darren Paige. This year saw a record number of students eager to participate, showcasing the growing interest and enthusiasm for this program. Initially, the Mustangs began the season with eight teams. After a few weeks of organizing and refining, the program settled into 5 enthusiastic and determined teams ready to tackle the challenges of Mock Trial. It promises to be another great year for Merrill Mock Trial!

### Round One

Merrill's Mock Trial teams had a strong showing in this year's competition! While two teams were eliminated in the first round, three teams advanced to regionals, showcasing their preparation and skill. An 8th-grade team, a 7th-grade team, and a 6th-grade team returned the next day to compete for a coveted spot in the State Mock Trial Championships. The Mustangs demonstrated resilience and teamwork, making their school proud. The Purple Team and the Blue Team advanced to State!

## 6th Grade Team



## State

The Mustang Mock Trial teams have brought home more accolades! Both the 8th-grade and 6th-grade teams earned state-qualifying plaques, adding to Merrill's proud tradition of success. These teams showcased incredible skill and determination, leaving a lasting mark on this year's competition. When asked about their victory, the 6th-grade team enthusiastically shared, "We're going to start practicing for next year!" Their dedication and excitement ensure that Merrill's Mock Trial program has a bright future ahead. Go Mustangs!







# Boys Basketball

## We got Next!

### This Day in History

#### A Look Back at the Unstoppable 2011 Mustangs

A Look Back at the Unstoppable 2011 Mustangs  
Let's take a moment to rewind to 2011, a year when the Mustangs etched their names into history with an impressive record of 18-0. That season, the Mustangs were truly unstoppable, dominating the court and leaving a legacy that still inspires.

The team was led by standout scorers Dontre English, who racked up an incredible 157 points for the White Team, and Brock Stillmonks, who contributed 64 points for the Blue Team. Their leadership and talent set the tone for a season to remember.

Here are some of the highlights and awards from this amazing team:

White Team:

- Mr. Hustle: Jacob Lindeburg
- Clutch Player: Ben Norman
- Most Improved: Daniel Lunde
- Defensive Player: Jakob Sheraden
- MVP: Dontre English

Blue Team:

- Mr. Hustle: Freddy Smith
- Most Improved: Henry Gunderson
- Defensive Player: Ned Turner
- Co-MVPs: Jalen Jones and David Wheeler

The team's dedication extended beyond games, as reflected by the players who achieved perfect practice attendance.

These committed athletes included:

- Alex Hilmes
- Jake Lindeburg
- Daniel Lunde
- Ben Norman
- Jordan Schwartz
- Freddy Smith

Looking back, it's easy to imagine that these boys are now doing great things in their lives. But in 2011, they were perfect—a testament to teamwork, talent, and unyielding determination. Go Mustangs!



### Reminders

- As we gear up for activities starting January 2nd, please remember:
- All participants must be registered on Bound.
- A current physical must be on file to participate.
- Don't wait—take care of this today so you're ready to go on day one!
- If you have questions or need assistance, please reach out to the Activities Office.

### We are playing at the Well too!

Feb  
23rd

3:00 Game get your tickets now

The boys will be playing before the Wolves game and at halftime. get your tickets for the game now. Click on the link below.

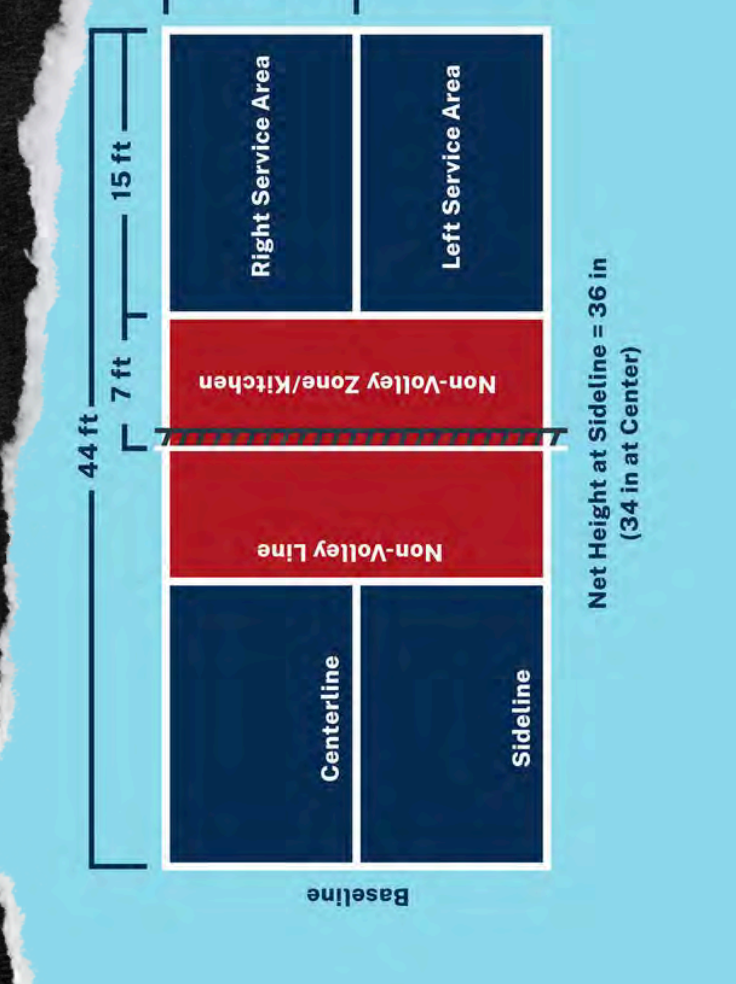
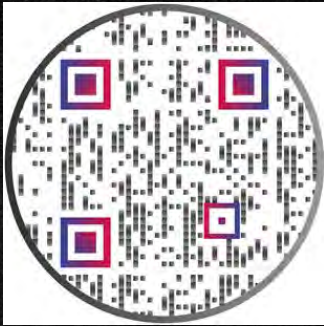
[Ticket Link](#)

### Contact Info

Head Coach: Michael.Southmayd@dmschools.org  
Assist Coach: Rakim.Tulis@dmschools.org  
Assist Coach Nick.Christiansen@dmschools.org

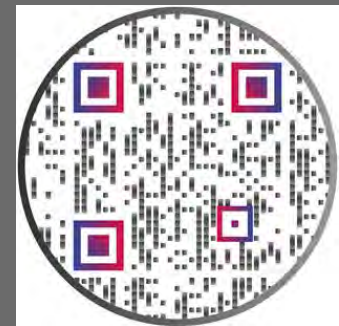
# Destination Merrill

Exciting news! As part of the ongoing Destination Merrill project, we are working on adding two pickleball courts to our backyard area. This initiative, with an estimated cost of \$24,000, aims to provide a lifelong recreational activity that will benefit both Merrill and the surrounding community. If you're interested in supporting this effort, we'd love to hear from you. You can reach out to the Merrill Activities Office for more information, or if you'd like to donate, simply use the QR code to visit the Merrill Donation site. Be sure to select Merrill Pickleball Court Donations when making your contribution.



[Link to donate](#)

*feel like donating*



Supporting Merrill Middle School and its various clubs and sports teams has never been easier. By utilizing the provided QR code, you can directly access Merrill's activities donation center through RevTrak, the same platform used for school fees. This streamlined process allows you to contribute to your favorite club or sport effortlessly. It's important to recognize that many of Merrill's dedicated club sponsors volunteer their time without compensation, making donations crucial to ensuring they have the necessary resources to run their activities effectively. Additionally, despite no longer charging fees for sports participation at Merrill, the school relies on donations to fund essential needs such as new uniforms and equipment. Your generosity is instrumental in maintaining the vibrancy of Merrill's extracurricular programs, and the school community expresses gratitude for your ongoing support.





# ONE MORE PAGE



## CLUB SPOTLIGHT STUDENT GOVERNMENT

### Food Drive Success!

We are thrilled to announce the incredible success of our recent Food Drive! Thanks to the generosity and hard work of our amazing students and dedicated staff, we were able to collect nearly 900 items of food donations to support our local community.

Your contributions will make a significant difference in the lives of many families in need. This achievement is a testament to the spirit of kindness and community that defines Merrill Middle School.

A special shout-out to our student volunteers, most notably Charlie Hillman and Eli Jackson, who tirelessly sorted and packed the donations, and to our staff members who coordinated and supported this initiative every step of the way. Your efforts have truly made this Food Drive a remarkable success.

Thank you once again for your outstanding support and participation. Together, we have shown that when we come together, we can achieve great things!

AND...the winner was 6th grade, who narrowly beat out 7th grade. Congratulations, 6th grade!



## GIRLS NOT DONE YET!

### Mustangs Never Say Die!

That's right! Our 6th and 7th grade girls are going to keep practicing for next year. Any 6th or 7th grade girl can participate in this opportunity. We will be running drills and scrimmaging for the next few months to prepare for the girls' basketball season next year. If you're interested, stop by and join us to play some basketball!

#### 6th and 7th Grade Girls Basketball Dates

December 18th 3:30 - 4:45 at Merrill

Jan 7th 4:45-6:00 at Roosevelt Small Gym

Jan 9th 6:00-7:00 at at Merrill

Jan 14th 4:45-6:00 at Roosevelt Small Gym

Jan 23rd 5:00 - 6:30 at Merrill

Feb 3rd 3:30 - 5:00 at Merrill

Feb 13th 3:30 - 5:00 at Merrill

Feb 20th 3:30-5:00 at Merrill

