



# Cheetah Chatter

Published by Meridian Park School & Meridian Park PTSA



## Talent Show: Mysterious Talents

Thank you to all of the wonderful performers and volunteers that made this year's show such a success! 49 kids performed at the Shoreline Auditorium on January 27—everything from singing, dancing, piano, original skits and more!



Issue Five, 2011–2012  
February 8, 2012

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## Upcoming Events

**February 9**  
Monthly PTSA Meeting

**February 13**  
Read-a-Thon Launches  
District 6th Grade Orchestra  
Festival at Spartan Gym

**February 20–24**  
No School—Mid-Winter  
Break

**March 6**  
Family Fitness Night & PTSA  
Meeting

**March 8**  
MP night at Einstein Middle  
School

**March 19**  
School Day—Snow Make-Up

**March 22 & 23:** MP Drama  
Club presents Peter Pan

**March 28**  
Westside Honor Band  
performance

Visit our Web sites for  
complete and up-to-date  
calendar information:

[www.meridianparkptsa.org](http://www.meridianparkptsa.org)

[schools.shorelineschools.org/  
meridianpark/](http://schools.shorelineschools.org/meridianpark/)

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# Meridian Park News

## Principal's Letter

Dear Meridian Park Families,

February is finally here and we are all thankful that the snow is gone! We are all truly happy to be back on track with school in full swing at Meridian Park.

First of all, thank you for your patience with all of those snow days and schedule adjustments that happened as a result of Mother Nature's storm. It was a crazy week for all of us—students, families and staff members! As beautiful as it was, I was grateful to get back to work and continue to focus on our school's academic goals. It was also fabulous to attend the awesome MP Talent Show and to hear and see so much amazing talent on the stage. The students were absolutely incredible!

This past conference week was a great opportunity for us to connect with families and to share academic updates. If you missed your child's conference, please know that we still want to meet with you. Please call or email your child's teacher to set this up. It is so important to stay connected to your child's school life and we learn so much from you every time we meet.

In the next few weeks, we have some exciting events happening for a number of Meridian Park students. Our students will be involved in many extra-curricular activities in addition to their classroom responsibilities. These include the District Westside Band and Orchestra Festivals and some creative Ballet classes in PE that will culminate in a fabulous Ballet performance in early March. In March, we will have our Open House and Book Fair, the PTSA Read-a-thon, the Drama Club Performance of *Peter Pan* and the Honor Band Festival here at MP and around other schools within the district. It will get busy so get ready for some fun opportunities to watch your children shine!

Lastly, take a look at our updated "back yard" photo in the newsletter. The new elementary field is looking gorgeous and we will be excited to have it next year! Have a wonderful February break with your family. Please read with your child everyday and play fun math games together!

~Amy Jessee, Principal  
amy.jessee@shorelineschools.org

## Garden Party!

Come help the 1st grade classes move the Earth! Sunday, February 26, 10:00am–2:00pm. A load of soil will be delivered near the cafeteria, then moved to the 'Pumpkin Patch' near the 1st grade rooms. Bring your family, wheel barrel, shovels, gloves and muscles. For more information, contact Mary Loes at [mary.loes@shorelineschools.org](mailto:mary.loes@shorelineschools.org).

## Coffee Break

Thank you to 2nd and 3rd grade families for hosting a coffee break for teacher appreciation February 2. Special thanks to the PTSA Liaisons for their coordination of this event.

## Attendance Reminder (or "what to do if you can't be there")

If your student will be absent for any reason, please call the MP office 206-393-4252 or email [jill.gwazdauskas@shorelineschools.org](mailto:jill.gwazdauskas@shorelineschools.org) to let the school know.

Please try to avoid planning events that will require your child to leave school during the day or plans that change in the middle of the day. This results in classroom interruptions that affect the learning process for all students. For example, if your child usually meets Mom at the end of the day but Grandma will be picking up, arrange to have Grandma meet the child at the usual location. We understand that emergencies occur but we ask for your cooperation in this matter.

Shoreline School District #412 does not discriminate against any protected classes. For further information on notice of non-discrimination, including the address and phone number of the Title IX officer, visit: [www.shorelineschools.org/info/title\\_ix.php](http://www.shorelineschools.org/info/title_ix.php).



## Kindergarten Registration Has Begun

If you know of any families interested in Kindergarten at Meridian Park, please send them our way soon!

# Meridian Park News

## Friendship, Families and Feelings

Last month, I wrote about the importance of sleep for children. Many children go through their days sleep-deprived, which can have a dramatic negative impact on academic performance, emotional stability and healthy weight.

Children from 3–12 years old need a minimum of 10 hours of sleep. Often, parents think their children get more sleep than they actually do.

If you are concerned about the amount of sleep your child gets, here are some ideas, taken from the Web sites [webmd.com](http://webmd.com) and [sleepforkids.org](http://sleepforkids.org), that might help:

- Teach school-aged children about healthy sleep habits.
- Emphasize the need for regular and consistent sleep schedule and bedtime routine.
- Make your child's bedroom conducive to sleep—dark, cool and quiet. Keep the bedtime environment (e.g. light, temperature) the same all night long.
- Keep TV and computers out of the bedroom. According to one recent study, TV viewing prior to bed can lead to difficulty falling and staying asleep. Save your child's favorite relaxing,

non-stimulating activities until last and have them occur in the child's bedroom.

- Avoid caffeine.
- Make bedtime the same time every night.

### Encourage Children To Fall Asleep On Their Own

Have your child form positive associations with sleeping. A child should not need a parent to help him/her fall asleep. The child who falls asleep on his or her own will be better able to return to sleep during normal nighttime awakenings and sleep throughout the night. Except during conditions when the child is sick, has been injured or clearly requires your assistance, it is important to give your child a consistent message that they are expected to fall asleep on their own.

Talk to your child's doctor about sleep. Parents/caregivers should discuss their child's sleep habits and problems with their child's doctor, as most sleep problems are easily treated. Healthcare professionals must regularly ask about a child's sleep.

~Annie Gage, MP Family Advocate  
[annie.gage@shorelineschools.org](mailto:annie.gage@shorelineschools.org), 206-393-1768

## Student Council Update

### Show Your Spirit

The next MP Spirit Day is Friday, February 17. It's Hat Day, so don your favorite chapeaux as you head to school.

### Penny Drive for Whisker City

Pennies (nickels, dimes, dollars, etc) are being collected by students for Whisker City (<http://whiskercity.com>), a Shoreline program that helps house, feed and care for homeless cats. This fundraiser for a great local organization will continue through mid-March. Each classroom has a jar for collecting pennies. Please encourage your family to participate!!

## Getting News to Families

If you have a long distance phone number as your primary contact phone for the school, please provide the school with a current email address to ensure that you get broadcast messages from Meridian Park. During the snow week in January, the School Messenger system was very helpful in getting out current information to families as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately, the system is not able to contact long-distance phone numbers. If you received notice from the school about the snow days, then you need not update anything. You can check and update your current email address by visiting the Family Access site with the login information provided earlier in the year. A link to Family Access is provided on the Meridian Park Web site.

### Don't Forget Your Coat!

The cold weather is still here! Please send your child with warm clothing for recess and outdoor play!



The MP "Backyard." We are excited to see more developments in 2012—come take a look soon if you have not seen it in awhile. It is amazing!



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# Meridian Park News

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## Notes from the Music Room

a message from Shari Anderson, Music Teacher

Meridian Park Arts Festival

Tuesday, May 22, 2012

6:00–8:00pm

6:00–6:30pm Poetry reading and chamber music

6:45–7:30pm Vocal Concert in the Gym, grades 2–5

All evening: Student Artwork displayed throughout the building

Please plan to attend this wonderful event with your family! All 2–5 grade students need to attend, and as spring calendars fill up fast, please enter this on your family calendar today. This is our grand championship arts “game” so to speak—the only one! We need every student to be there as we are so eager to share our beautiful music with you, our honored guests! Most coaches are great about working with their players so the kids can be at the concert, and we all know that parents can move mountains in order to attend—you won’t want to miss it!

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## Library Notes

a message from Jenny Hillger, Library Media Specialist

Book Fair Luau!

Our BIG Scholastic Book Fair is fast approaching! This annual event will run from Monday, March 12–Friday, March 16. This year’s theme is Book Fair Luau. You can access our book fair information on Meridian Park Web site. The Web site contains links to featured book titles, special programs, and volunteer opportunities.

If you would like to volunteer at the book fair, you can contact me directly by phone at 206-393-4125, via email at [jenny.hillger@shorelineschools.org](mailto:jenny.hillger@shorelineschools.org), or through a link on the book fair Web site. Our Scholastic Book Fair is our biggest library fundraiser of the year, and we use book fair profits to purchase books for all students and to finance author visits. This year, our book fair profits will finance a guest visit from author and illustrator Matt Holm, co-creator of the uber-popular *Babymouse* and *Squish* graphic novel series. We hope to see everyone at the book fair in March.

Happy Reading!

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## The Cheetah Gym

a message from Pamela Willoughby, P.E. Teacher

What’s Going on in PE

February begins with hockey, and moves to ballet mid-month. Each 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade class will experience a fun art experience during gym time, finishing with a dance performance on Family Fitness Night, Tuesday March 6 at 6:30–8:30pm. We will start with a ballet performance, followed by a performance by the Circus Arts club and fun family activities.

Getting Ready for Field Day!

This year’s Field Day will be Friday June 1, and we hope to use the newly completed baseball field and cement area outside the gym for our fun activities. It will be an amazing experience for all the students and parents who volunteer. Last year’s field day was grand—let’s make sure this one is even better. Who wants to volunteer to help with all the fun? We want you!!! To sign up, contact Ms. Willoughby at [pamela.willoughby@shorelineschools.org](mailto:pamela.willoughby@shorelineschools.org).



## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade T-Shirts Still Available!

Don't miss your chance to order a t-shirt! They come in Adult sizes S, M, L, and the cost of each shirt is \$12.00. These would be a fun shirt to have for 6<sup>th</sup> grade camp, and it's recommended that you purchase two shirts—one signed by classmates to keep as memorabilia and one to wear! For ordering, please contact Dixie Yamane at [dixyamane@yahoo.com](mailto:dixyamane@yahoo.com) or 206-795-2481.

## MP PTSA President's Message

Happy Chinese New Year Meridian Park Families!

Despite the extra "winter break" we experienced with a fun-filled snow "week," our schedule keeps rolling. We marched right into the annual MP Talent Show that produced some outstanding acts. Everything from magic to piano to skits to lots of musical performances—what an enjoyable evening! I'd like to extend a big thank you to Dixie Yamane and Susan Duthweiler for organizing and orchestrating this entertaining evening for our community. Because of their hard work and dedication to the arts, our kids experienced moments of stardom on the stage and created wonderful memories.

As we march forward in 2012, you'll notice flyers with information about two very important awards the PTSA sponsors each year: the Andréé Rice Outstanding Educator Award and the Golden Acorn Award. The Andréé Rice Outstanding Educator Award recognizes one of our teachers who has gone "above and beyond" in the classroom either this year or consistently over a period of time. The Golden Acorn Award recognizes one of our many outstanding volunteers for their contributions to our community. So start thinking about who you would like to nominate!

We are proud to say that we awarded just under \$2000 in grants to our teachers and staff in December. The grant process is very rewarding as it reflects one of the core missions of the PTSA—to support our teachers and help them educate and nurture our children. Because of you, we are able to support many of our classrooms and district programs. We really appreciate your financial support to make these grants possible—THANK YOU!

The MP PTSA Drama Club just finished auditions and casting for the production of Peter Pan. The 48 students enrolled in the club are already working hard in rehearsals to give us two amazing shows on March 22 and March 23 at the Shoreline Auditorium. Keep watching for posters and information in your boomerang. You will not be disappointed.

We will also be hosting another fabulous Family Fitness Night in March. This promises to be a great evening of Circus Arts and a special dance performance by our students. We look forward to seeing everyone at these fun events!

Nominations for next year's PTSA Board are still open! Let us know if you have an interest in serving and being part of a team that works hard to provide our kids with fun events, exciting classes and lots of educational opportunities above and beyond the normal classroom time. It's a great way to get to know your fellow parents and have fun along the way. Don't be afraid of "commitment"—you will look back on this short period of time when our kids are young and say "it was worth it!" We would love to have you aboard.

Have a wonderful rest of the month!

*~Kathy Henderson  
MP PTSA President, 2010–2012  
kathyhenderson@me.com*

### Knitting

Knitting club for grades 4–6 starts Monday, February 6. There's still room, so if you're interested in signing up, contact Rachel Ariss at [arissfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:arissfamily@yahoo.com).

### Monthly Meetings

The first Tuesday of each month, YOUR Meridian Park PTSA assembles to discuss ways to assist teachers in their classrooms with volunteers or programs to help supplement the student learning experience. We welcome any and all Meridian Park parents to become active PTSA members and to join us and share your ideas.

### Read-A-Thon

The Annual Read-a-Thon will begin on February 13—watch this week's Boomerang for information. This PTSA-sponsored program helps raise money for the great programs of the PTSA, including classes, events and grants to teachers.

Track your reading on the calendar included in your packet, and collect pledges from family, friends and neighbors. Incentives will be awarded, including credits for book fair purchases and more. Questions? Contact Melanie Gillespie at [melaniegillespie@mac.com](mailto:melaniegillespie@mac.com). Thank you to everyone participating, and happy reading to all!

### Chess Club

A new chess session starts on Thursday, February 9. For more information, contact Rachel Ariss at [arissfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:arissfamily@yahoo.com).

### Yearbook Club

Meridian Park's Yearbook Club students are hard at work in the hallways, on the playground and at Meridian Park activities snapping candid photos for this year's yearbook. So if you see a shutterbug with a Meridian Park Press pass around his or her neck, be sure to smile big!

And get ready to vote in your classrooms for the 2012 Cheetah Choice Awards in categories such as Meridian Park, Around Town, Leisure, Entertainment and the ever-popular *Completely Random* category. Voting will take place before mid-winter break.

The Meridian Park Elementary PTSA and Dandylyon Drama present

# PETER PAN

a musical play  
by David Barrett  
based on the original story by JM Barrie  
Directed by Melani Lyons  
Musically Directed by Rob Jones  
Choreographed by Symphony Canady

The Shoreline Auditorium  
at the Shoreline Center  
18560 1st Ave. NE Shoreline, Washington

Thursday, March 22nd and  
Friday, March 23rd @ 7:00pm

Tickets \$7 for adults  
\$5 for students

 Dandylyon  
Drama  
www.dandylyondrama.com

All royalties go to the Great Ormond Street Childrens Hospital Charity



## O'Keefe in the Classroom

Each classroom at Meridian Park is working on a group project inspired by this month's Georgia O'Keefe lesson lead by our Art Docents.

These projects will be on display and available for purchase at a silent auction in the school entryway during Open House on March 15, 2012. Be sure to bring your checkbook—these projects are one-of-a-kind.

The funds raised during the auction will provide supplies for future Art Docent lessons and projects provided by parent volunteers and the PTSA. Each child at Meridian Park in grades 1–6 will receive 4 art lessons this year.

Planning is already starting for next year and the Docent Committee is looking for 3 or 4 additional parents who could help next year. No art background is necessary and the time commitment is small. Send back the volunteer form that came home or contact Rachel Ariss at [arissfamily@yahoo.com](mailto:arissfamily@yahoo.com) if you'd like more information.

The MP Mandarin Chinese Club celebrates the Lunar New Year.



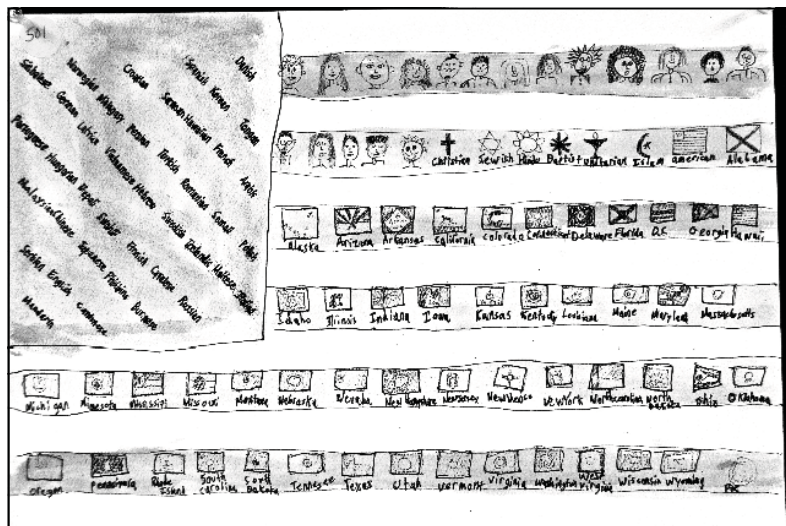
## Focus Day is February 20, 2012

Each year PTA members from across the state travel to the State Capitol to meet and lobby their legislators on behalf of our kids and their education and join in a rally on the Capitol Steps.

PTA volunteer advocates can make a difference when they come to the Capitol in large numbers. Shoreline PTA Council is providing bus service to Olympia that day. They are partnering with Northshore PTA Council and have 27 seats available. Cost is \$10/adult, \$5/child, maximum \$25/family. The bus usually leaves around 7:30am at the Shoreline Senior Center and returns about 4:00pm. To reserve seats, contact Sarah-Ann Woodfield at 206-890-1056 or email [shorelineptaleg@gmail.com](mailto:shorelineptaleg@gmail.com).

For more information on Focus Day, visit [www.wastatepta.org](http://www.wastatepta.org). We need you this year to help shape 2012 legislative priorities in what will again be a very difficult economic climate. Bring your kids!





Lucas Kleyn's Reflections Submission

## MP Students Receive Top Honors for Reflections

The Shoreline PTA Council Reflections reception took place on January 11, 2012. Families from throughout the Shoreline district were able to view their work, and 15 MP students had their artwork, poems, and musical pieces represented.

MP made a terrific showing. Five students qualified as district finalists, and their work will proceed to the state level of competition. Two students received honorable mentions. The students whose work will go on to the next level of competition are as follows: Eileen Beres, Musical Composition, Christopher Combs, Photography, Mariana DeGrazia, Musical Composition, Lucas Kleyn, Visual Arts, and Ray Li, Visual Arts. The works of Evelyn Li, Visual Arts, and Ardelle Ning, Literature, both received Honorable Mentions. Congratulations!

We want to thank everyone again who participated in the 2011/2012 Reflections Program. The quality of the pieces that Meridian Park students submitted was second to none. Every submission was thoughtfully executed with great attention to detail and consideration of the theme. The theme "Diversity means..." was challenging. MP students interpreted it beautifully. You have made our environment so much richer by sharing your creativity with us.

We hope that every MP student will submit a piece to Reflections next year. In order to encourage greater participation, we are announcing next year's theme early. We encourage you to start thinking about the theme and even start your piece. The 2012/2013 Reflections theme is "The Magic of a Moment." We look forward to receiving all of your artwork/poems/musical pieces/videos in the fall.

If you have any questions about this year's program or next year's theme, please feel free to contact Jennifer Combs at either [combs47@comcast.net](mailto:combs47@comcast.net) or 206-718-0057.

## Where Do Your Donations Go?

The MP PTSA offers cash grants to Meridian Park teachers for projects and supplies that help our kids succeed. Each month in the Cheetah Chatter, we will highlight a couple of projects funded directly with the money you and your family raise. Thank you for supporting your school!

### Photography Enrichment

Description: This grant will cover disposable film cameras and developing costs for a third grade class. With the direction of creating a personal portfolio, documenting individual communities and relationships, students will see our world through multiple lenses. Along with the photographs, students will incorporate a writing portion with this study, practicing their ability to connect images to words. The end product will yield an in-depth perception of a child and his or her own ideas on how we, as a community, impact our environment, and on how they, as a generation, visualize the natural wonders of the world.

### Special Ed Conference-SLP

Description: This grant will pay a portion of the cost for Ms. Cox to attend the 2012 Special Education Conference in March, sponsored by Western Washington University. The purpose of this conference is to provide up-to-date research and treatment strategies on a wide variety of special education issues. This conference provides numerous opportunities for professionals to acquire new information and ideas to work collaboratively to meet the needs of students with special needs. As a speech language pathologist working with students with developmental delays, learning more about up-to-date technology for students to access communication is beneficial. This teacher is currently using a district-issued iPad with students and would like more support to make the best use of it.

### Children's Literature Seminar

Description: MP Librarian Ms. Hillger will attend "What's New in Children's Literature and How to Use it in Your Program 2012," a seminar on the latest and best children's literature, presented by Peggy Sharp, an internationally recognized authority on children's literature with decades of experience. By attending the seminar, Ms. Hillger will learn about the best new books for all elementary students and new ways to incorporate technology, such as social networking sites where students can share their favorite books with one another and the use of e-readers such as the iPad.

### You Can Help, Too

Volunteers are needed to join the committee that reviews the grant applications and distributes the funds. This is a small time commitment (reading the applications and attending one meeting) that makes a tangible difference for our school. Contact Jodi Forschmiedt at [jodi@jodiwrites.com](mailto:jodi@jodiwrites.com) to learn more.

# Resources for Families

information on these resources is offered as a service to families—these are not always MP or MP PTSA events or workshops

## Shoreline Barter Party

Hosted by Meridian Park Neighborhood Association  
Saturday, March 10, 6:00–9:00pm, Meridian Park Cafeteria

Join your neighbors for a Barter Party, a community event where neighbors gather to exchange goods and services for fun. We'll share a potluck dinner, music and merrymaking—even if you don't barter. There will be live music and a kid's craft area. For information or to volunteer, contact Naomi at 206-853-1149 or MeridianParkNA@gmail.com.

## Valentines Tween Night with the Shoreline Teen Program

Tween Night: Winter Wonderland (5th & 6th grades only)  
Date: Saturday, February 11, 2012  
Location: Richmond Highlands Recreation Center,  
16544 Fremont Avenue N  
More info: 206-801-2600 or  
[www.facebook.com/ShorelineTeenProgram](http://www.facebook.com/ShorelineTeenProgram)

## The Not-Its!

Shoreline-Lake Forest Park Arts Council is delighted to introduce you and your family to The Not-Its! as part of their Children's Series concert season on Saturday, February 11. Shoreline Community College Campus Theater, 11:00am. Tickets are \$7 each and can be purchased online at [www.shorelinearts.net](http://www.shorelinearts.net) or via phone, at 206-417-4645. The Shoreline Community College Campus Theater is located at 16101 Greenwood Ave N, Bldg 1600, Shoreline, WA 98133.

## Call for Junior Art

The school year may only be half over, but the Shoreline Arts Council is looking for art for its junior art festival poster, and of course the Junior Art Show later on in June, from which art will be selected for the 2012-13 District wall calendar. Submissions are due by April 15. For more information please visit [www.shorelinearts.net](http://www.shorelinearts.net).

## Join the PTSA

Joining the PTSA shows your support for your school, education and community in Meridian Park, in Shoreline and beyond.

The PTSA is not only a local organization but also represents our children on a state and national level on public policies in the government.

Our monthly meetings on the first Tuesday at 7:00pm and a great way to learn about what's happening at our school.

### Three membership levels:

Annual Member: \$10/year per person  
Cheetah Cheerleader: \$25/year per person  
Cheetah Champion: \$35/year per person

### Three easy ways to join:

1. **VISIT** the MP office and ask for a membership envelope.
2. **E-MAIL** Ann Yee at [theyeefamily@hotmail.com](mailto:theyeefamily@hotmail.com)
3. **SIGN UP** at any PTSA event. Join us for some fun, then join the organization!



Providing clothing support to  
Shoreline School District Families.

North City Portables  
west end of North City Elementary  
816 NE 190th Street, Shoreline  
Wednesdays 6:30–8:00pm  
206-393-4916

*The WORKS is a Shoreline PTA Council  
Family Resource*

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17077 Meridian Avenue N :: Shoreline, WA 98133 :: 206-361-4251

Meridian Park Elementary

[schools.shorelineschools.org/  
meridianpark/](http://schools.shorelineschools.org/meridianpark/)

Amy Jessee, Principal  
*email:* [amy.jessee@shorelineschools.org](mailto:amy.jessee@shorelineschools.org)  
Hillary Clark, Early Childhood  
Program Manager  
Roxanne Brendible, Office Manager  
Jill Gwazdauskas, Registrar  
Janet Boyett, School Nurse  
Annie Gage, Family Advocate

2011–12 MP PTSA  
Executive Committee

[www.MeridianParkPTSA.org](http://www.MeridianParkPTSA.org)

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Reneé Smith, VP Events  
Open, VP Fundraising  
Janina Pacunski, Secretary  
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