

Cheetah Chatter

Published by Meridian Park School & Meridian Park PTSA



Alex Zerbe Kicks off the Read-a-Thon



MP's Celebration of Literacy month kicked off month with an awesome assembly and performance by the professional zaniac, Alex Zerbe.



Issue Seven, 2012–2013
March 13, 2013

In This Issue

Lunar New Year	1
Principal's Message	2
May Testing Information	4
MP PTSA News	6

Upcoming Events

March 14
PTSA appreciation day—treats for our wonderful staff!

March 15
Student Council student store open from 8:15–9:00am

March 17
Landscaping party at MP with Neighborhood Association 1:00pm

March 18
No school—Non-Student Workday

March 20
Honor Band concert at Einstein (7:00pm)

March 21
Skating party at Lynnwood Bowl (6:00–8:00pm)

March 22
Dress as Your Favorite Book Character Spirit Day at MP!

March 26
Willie Wonka assembly (9:30am), PTSA Educator of the Year and Golden Acorn announcements!

March 28 & March 30
Willy Wonka Performance by Drama Club at Shorecrest theatre (7:00pm)

March 29
Honor Band tour/ assembly in the gym (10:45am)

Celebrating the Lunar New Year

The Mandarin Chinese classes had wonderful Lunar New Year celebrations. We made many New Year's artworks, participated in the school Lunar New Year parade, and performed the Dragon dance and the Lion dance, in addition to making dumplings and Hongbao. Students received lucky candies and brand-new Chinese currency.



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

www.meridianparkptsa.org
schools.shorelineschools.org/meridianpark/

Follow the MP PTSA on Facebook

facebook

Meridian Park News

Principal's Letter

Wow! Our students have been in school for over 100 school days! Many of our primary classrooms celebrated this milestone with a hundreds-day celebration and fun activities! With just over one trimester to go in the school year, we still have a lot to accomplish and even more to celebrate. Teachers are working extremely hard to plan focused academic lessons and educational experiences for your children.

Our new primary reading block (the "Walk to Read" program) is truly helping us to reach all of our students at their individual reading level. All of our K–6 teachers are teaching intentional reading strategies lessons through our supplemental curriculum called The Comprehension Toolkit. At numerous grade levels, students are practicing their math skills through online programs like IXL Math and XtraMath as well as through our Envision Math Program. The newly adopted science curriculum is coming to life all over the building, and science projects are popping up in classrooms and even spilling out to the hallways and common areas! Our PTSA art docents are busy helping students to explore one more new artist in March and April and many of us are beginning to prepare for our fantastic MP Arts Festival in mid-May!

During March, we began our Celebration of Literacy month here at Meridian Park. We kicked off this month with an awesome assembly and performance by the professional zaniac, Alex Zerbe, followed by an engaging author's visit from Barry Deutsch, an author/ graphic artist. He wrote the book *Hereville* and it is available for check out in our library. Additionally, we are in full swing with our school-wide Read-a-thon. It is an exciting endeavor! Please be sure to read the important information about the Read-a-thon that was sent home last week. We have lots of fun activities and prizes to motivate students to read. Just by participating and reading, students can have the chance to enter a weekly Cheetah reader's raffle, take part in a book character bulletin board contest, create a book cover illustration, and dress up as their favorite character for Spirit Day! We want ALL of our students to participate in this school-wide Read-a-thon. All we ask from you as parents is that you encourage them to participate and sign those weekly reading logs! Of course, we also appreciate any financial support and pledges your family and friends can provide to help us raise funds for more literacy events, supplies, assemblies, and books at Meridian Park!

Our 3–6 grade teachers will also start gearing up for the state assessment test (the MSP) that will happen after Spring break. It's only eight weeks away. Please make sure to avoid any absences during this window of time as make up tests are challenging to administer. The testing schedule is included in this newsletter and a family letter/e-mail will also go out soon.

As many of you know, all of our MP teachers meet as professional learning communities (PLCs) to talk about students' progress and to figure out individual plans for students in need of additional support. We also use this time to talk about our academic and behavioral interventions and ways to adjust them to meet our students' needs. During these PLCs, we regularly use classroom-based assessments and district assessments to measure your child's progress and to discuss plans for any additional needs. The best part is that we also celebrate student strengths, improvement, and growth on academic measures! Our teachers truly are fabulous.

Lastly, as you may have noticed in our packed Boomerangs over the last few weeks, there are a lot of fun extracurricular activities and events happening for many Meridian Park students. This is an unusually busy month filled with exciting endeavors. We truly appreciate the extra support you give to enable your child to participate in these many school activities. They include the Honor Band performance/assembly, the MP PTSA Drama Club performance (Willy Wonka) and numerous after-school activities. Our Open House and Book Fair are also right around the corner in early April.

Life at Meridian Park is never dull and we are truly grateful to all of you for helping to bring such great experiences for our children! This past week, we also celebrated our fantastic classified staff and appreciated them for all of the hard work they do on behalf of our students. As classroom para-educators, custodians, office staff, health care professionals, kitchen staff, child care providers, and in other roles, we feel so lucky to have such dedicated people here at MP. Big thanks to all of them. Here's to a great last trimester of school for your child!

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

Mark your calendars for 2013–2014!

First day of the 2013–14 school year: September 4, 2013
Winter break: December 23, 2013–January 3, 2014
Mid-Winter break: February 17–21, 2014
Spring break: April 21–25, 2014

Morning Behavior

Students are arriving too early for school and are left unsupervised by the classroom doors and even in the library area. The first school bell rings at 9:05am. Students should not be at school before 9:00am without adult supervision. Please help us to enforce this policy.

Meridian Park News

Sixth-Grade Math Team Qualifies for Elite Division in Math is Cool

Jamie Forschmiedt, Logan Gnanapragasam, Jonathan Zhou, Christopher Lawson, Imran Majeed, Maria Babcock, Genevieve Trimbelle, Evelyn Li, Emily Nguyen, Eileen Beres, Evan Zverev, Kevin Lee and Aaron Gray competed in the sixth-grade Math is Cool Championship on February 8 at Mount Rainier High School in Des Moines.

Meridian Park was in Division 1A, the most competitive division, because of their performance in past years. The sixth-grade Meridian Park team—Jamie, Christopher, Maria, Evelyn, Emily, Eileen, Evan, and Kevin—placed fifth in a field of nine Division 1A teams. Jamie was the top individual scorer from Meridian Park.

The championships were conducted at five locations: Seattle, Spokane, Vancouver, Wenatchee, and the Tri-Cities. The top eight teams overall from all locations and divisions are invited to the Elite Division. Meridian Park was seventh and has accepted the invitation to the 6th-grade Elite Masters in Moses Lake on May 18. Jamie, Christopher, Maria, and Evelyn will represent Meridian Park at the Masters.

Volunteer Opportunity!

MSP testing is coming up in April and May. Parent volunteers are needed Monday April 29, Monday May 6, and Monday May 9, to help with lunch while our usual student helpers are taking the test. You can help for the entire lunch period of 11:20–12:50, or during one 30-minute lunch period. Sign up with Annie Gage (annie.gage@shorelineschools.org or 206-393-1768), or sign up in the MP lobby.

Lost and Found

There are many coats and lost and found items in the front lobby. Please take a look to locate your children's lost items. All remaining lost-and-found items will go to The WORKS on March 27.

Reminder from the MP Office

Please avoid scheduling appointments during school hours. Your child misses important academic time and it causes disruption during the teaching hours. In the rare occasions when you cannot avoid it, please send a note to the teacher so they can be prepared. We are not able to call for your child until you are in the office and have signed them out. Thank you for understanding this policy.

Important Enrollment Reminder

Please complete and return to school the enrollment form indicating whether or not your child will return to Meridian Park next year. Thank you! This information really helps us to plan for classrooms and staff for the following year.



Teachers have fun with our special guest author, Barry Deutsch, at an assembly in March!

Testing Information for 3–6 Grade Parents

State MSP (Measure of Student Progress) testing is around the corner! Please mark your calendars for the testing period of May 1–15 (with extended days beyond for make-up testing). Please avoid planning any absences, doctor's appointments, or family trips during that time and help your children to get a good night's rest!

Thank you so much for your attention to this! This year we will take more state tests using the new online system and we will be sure to practice this many times with demo tests so that students become comfortable with this process. Testing dates are as follows:

- May 1: 5th grade reading
- May 2: 4th grade reading
- May 7: 4th grade writing part one
- May 8: 3rd grade math, 5th grade math online, 6th grade reading online
- May 9: 4th grade writing part two
- May 10: 3rd grade reading
- May 14: 4th grade math online
- May 15: 5th grade science online, 6th grade math online

CandyGrams Success!

February's CandyGram sale was a great fundraising success! With support from our Meridian Park community, we raised an additional \$390 to send our 6th graders to Camp Orkilla in the spring.

Special thanks to our 6th grade families. Your willingness to work so hard making CandyGrams, donating candy or cash, and helping to organize and sell to eager students made all the difference!

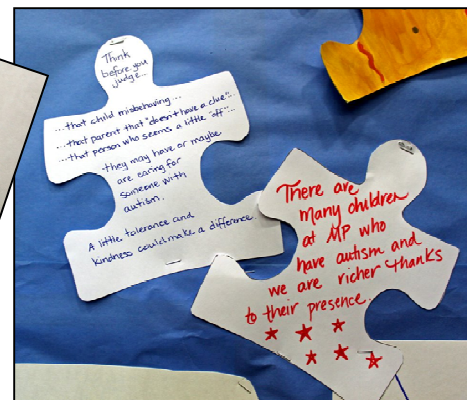
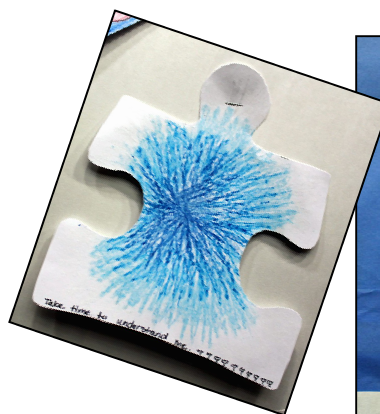
Meridian Park News

Meridian Park is Shining a Light on Autism

April is Autism Awareness Month. Help raise awareness and honor Meridian Park families affected by autism by creating a unique puzzle piece for an Autism Awareness display in the lobby.

The puzzle piece is the international symbol for autism, representing the mystery and complexity of understanding the disorder and its causes. Blank puzzle pieces will be available beginning March 20 in classrooms and in the lobby.

Students can decorate the puzzle pieces any way they choose, making them as different as the many faces of autism. Decorated puzzle pieces may be returned to teachers or to the designated location in the lobby. They will be added to the display throughout the month of April.



April Dates for your Calendar

April is Autism Awareness Month nationally and we are honoring that at Meridian Park. Take a look at our front display with puzzle pieces/ messages about autism come April!

April 1
Report cards go home

April 2-4
6th Grade Camp

April 11
Highly Capable Program tours at Meridian Park (9:30am and 2:00pm)

April 11
Open House at 5:30pm and Bookfair!

April 17
PTSA Golden Acorn/ Outstanding Educator Appreciation Recognition event at Shoreline Center

April 21
Landscaping work party at Meridian Park with Neighborhood Association (1:00pm)

April: 22-26
Spring Break

Student Council Behavioral Expectation Videos

Our Student Council has been working on MP behavioral expectation videos and they will be broadcasted at lunch by the end of the month. These videos show our students what to do and what not to do around our school. They are awesome! Big thanks to the students involved.

Meridian Park School Store

The Meridian Park School Store will be open two days in March:

- Friday, March 15, 8:15-9:00am
- Friday, March 22, 3:40-4:20pm

Students who show school spirit and who visit the store will receive a discount.

Last month, the School Store sold pencils, erasers, scissors, protractors, stickers, and magnets. New items are coming, including folders, thin binders, pencil sharpeners, and spiral notebooks! Come enjoy!



Global Reading participants from Meridian Park. Students placed second place in the District-wide challenge on February 28.

Meridian Park News

Notes from the Music Room

Happy St. Patrick's Day and Happy Easter from the Meridian Park Music Room!

The 2013 Meridian Park Arts Festival is Tuesday, May 21, from 6:00–8:00pm. This annual celebration features a vocal music concert in the gym from 6:45–7:30pm given by all 2–5 graders. The evening will include poetry readings, chamber music, and displays of visual arts around the building.

Please plan to attend this wonderful event with your family! All 2–5 grade students are expected to attend. 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 team and schedule 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!

Here are some highlights of the last month:

Sixth grade students performed so fabulously in the Shoreline

a message from Shari Anderson, Music Teacher

West Side Choral Festival. Performances included 6th grade honor choir, middle school, and high school choirs. The music was outstanding. We are so fortunate to be part of such a wonderful community that values and supports music education and the enriching impact it has on the lives of our young people.

Thank you to our Meridian Park 6th grade honor choir participants: Tabitha Bondurant, John (Freddy) Byington, Faith Cook, Cesar Corletto, Julia Gaynor, Menen Ghizaw, Michelle Gonzalez-Rodriguez, Yosef Hagos, Katherine Hegerberg, Jessica Hwee, Isabelle Jones, Sumra Khan, Evangelia Koceski, Evelyn Li, Malia Motoyama, Kaito Nasu, Erin Perkowski, Aloki Sakya, Katie Stellwagen, Annie Suh, and Mia Van Inwegen.

On March 7, Meridian Park 5th grade students attended a magnificent performance of Sergei Prokofiev’s *Peter and the Wolf*. This was one of four beautiful performances given as a gift by the Seattle Symphony to a total of 10,000 5th graders in the Puget Sound area.

Library Notes

a message from Jenny Hillger, Library Media Specialist

Meridian Park’s Celebration of Literacy!

We kicked off our celebration of literacy on Friday, March 1, with zaniac Alex Zerbe. Alex pumped up the students to read and participate in the Read-a-Thon and the Cheetah Reader’s Weekly Raffle! We also welcomed graphic novelist Barry Deutsch on Monday, March 4 for two phenomenal presentations about writing, drawing, and perseverance. Mr. Deutsch’s shows included audience participation in reader’s theater and creating character illustrations. Amazing! There are seven copies of his Hereville series: *How Mirka Got Her Sword*, and *How Mirka Met a Meteorite* in our library collection, and they are always checked out. Students wishing to purchase these books must turn in their order forms to me no later than Friday, March 15, at 3:30pm.

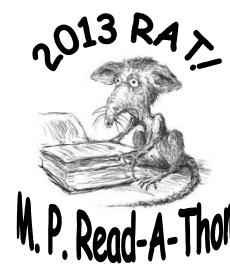
Literacy Activities

Turn in MP Cheetah Readers Weekly Raffle #2
Design-a-New-Book-Cover Contest.....
Favorite Character Illustration Contest.....
Turn in MP Cheetah Readers Weekly Raffle #3
Read-a-Thon Ends
Turn in Read-a-Thon Money
Dress-Like-A-Favorite-Book-Character Spirit Day
Read-a-Thon Prizes Distributed

Dates to Remember

Due to teachers on Thursday, March 14
Due to teachers by Friday, March 15
Winners announced on Tuesday, March 19
Due to teachers on Thursday, March 21
Wednesday, March 20
March 21–April
Friday, March 22
Early April

Our huge spring Scholastic Book Fair will run the week of April 8–12, 8:40am–4:00pm daily (except Friday, until 1:00pm), as well as during Open House on Thursday evening, April 11. If you would like to volunteer at the book fair, please contact me (jenny.hillger@shorelineschools.org or 206-393-4125).



The Cheetah Gym

This Month

This month in PE we’re playing gaga ball, bunker ball, medicine ball relays, and capture the pigs and chickens. We’re also performing fitness testing and perfecting running skills. Joe Puetz will be visiting our gym to teach golfing skills March 11–15, and a local gymnastics school will be coming soon to teach gymnastics lessons. We have finished our basketball unit and will be starting volleyball soon. The primary classes generally have lots of fun lead-up games, and we use balloons and beach balls for volleyball.

Circus Arts

Our Circus Arts team had a successful season and a wonderful performance. Thank you for all your support. It was a great deal of

a message from Pamela Willoughby, P.E. Teacher

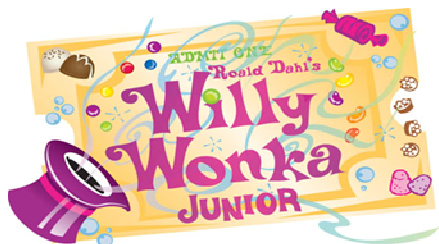
fun to coach. Thank you to Kelly Main, who also coached the team. Thank you to Dixie Yamane and Renee Arellano also. Our team this year was especially great!

Coming Up

More sports are coming in the Spring: track and field, soccer, more football, practicing Field Day events, fitness testing, cup stacking, wall climbing, and 1/2 mile and mile practice runs. In mid-May we start utilizing our \$3,000 Creative Dance Grant. The show will be June 10 at 9:30am in the MP gym. Please attend if you can! Thank you to the Shoreline Arts Council and the Shoreline Foundation for your support of all my grants over the years.

Get Your Tickets Today!

Don't hesitate – use the order form from your Boomerang or visit the Meridian Park office to pick one up.



Thursday, March 28 & Saturday, March 30

7:00pm

Shorecrest High School

Performing Arts Center

Tickets: \$7/Adult, \$5/Students

PTSA Meeting

Please join us on the first Tuesday of the month for the Meridian Park PTSA meeting. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 9 in the Meridian Park library. Please join us, especially if you have any questions about what your PTSA does for our school and students. We welcome all ideas and suggestions. If you have any questions, please contact Janina Pacunski, PTSA secretary, at jpacunski@yahoo.com or 206-715-3828.

March Works Drive

The WORKS Drive continues in March with toothpaste and tooth brushes. Keeping kids in our community healthy, warm and safe is a priority for The WORKS, a Shoreline PTA Council program. It is a priority for the MP PTSA as well. Please help us support children and families needing a little boost by donating toiletries and new or gently used clothing. Collection boxes are the school lobby—let's fill those up!

MP PTSA will be coordinating the collection of specific items over the next six months, and direct donations are always welcome at The WORKS (see page 6 for drop-off info). You can find out more about this great program by picking up a flyer in the MP lobby or visiting: www.shorelinepta.com/PTA/The_WORKS.html.



MP Baseball Outing

MP PTSA Mariners Game on Friday, May 10, 2013! Look for the ticket order forms in Boomerang Folders on April 3. Cost of the tickets are \$14 per person.



As part of our Roots of Empathy program, Baby Henry visits first graders in Ms. Kushner's classroom. This program is a wonderful learning opportunity for our students as they watch a baby grow up over the school year. Come see our bulletin boards by our first and third-grade classrooms!



Great family night at Meridian Park! Parents learned about the Raz-Kids.com program and best practice reading strategies.

Meridian Park PTSA Grants

The MP PTSA offers cash grants to Meridian Park teachers for projects and supplies that help our kids succeed. Below are the grants funded in November. Another round of grants is currently being reviewed and funding will be announced soon. These grants are funded directly with the money you and your family raise. Thank you for supporting your school!

Title: Reading Block and Robotics Laptop

Grade level: K–2 + Robotics students

Amount: \$600

Description: This grant covers half the cost of a MacIntosh laptop computer to be used in the reading resource room as part of the K–2 Reading Block program. Further use will be made of the computer by the PTSA's Robotics Club.

Title: Wetlands Unit

Grade level: 5

Amount: \$500

Description: This grant covers one third of the cost of the Wetlands unit, in which naturalist Julie Luthy provides in-class and field trip experiences for the three 5th grade classrooms. The unit offers hands-on learning in science concepts covered on the 5th grade MSP.

Title: Nystrom Atlases

Grade level: 6

Amount: \$419

Description: This grant will purchase a class set of 30 world atlases and the associated teacher's manual for the two 6th grade general education classes.

Title: Class Sets of Headphones

Grade level: K–2

Amount: \$256

Description: This grant will cover half the cost of headphones for all of the laptop carts, enabling students to use programs that include a sound component without disturbing their classmates. The remaining cost will be covered by building funds.

Title: Reading Block Equipment

Grade level: K–2

Amount: \$251

Description: This grant will purchase a set of early reader books and listening station headphones for the K–2 students who are struggling the most with reading.

Title: HiLo Books and Novel Study Books

Grade level: 5

Amount: \$245

Description: This grant will purchase a set of high-interest, low-reading-level books for 5th graders who are reading below grade level. It will also purchase a class set of *Tuck Everlasting* for class novel study.

Title: Helping Students Learn the Dewey Decimal System

Grade Level: K–6

Amount: \$235

Description: This grant will purchase permanent signage and teaching materials that will enable MP Librarian Jenny Hillger to teach students to use the Dewey Decimal System.

Title: Positive Behavior Materials

Grade level: K–6

Amount: \$200

Description: This grant will purchase some supplies needed to continue implementing the positive behavior program at Meridian Park, including posters, badges, and lanyards.

Title: Tea Overboard Unit

Grade level: 5

Amount: \$150

Description: This grant complements a Shoreline Arts Council grant to bring Playworks Teaching Artist Ruth McRee to do history learning activities with the three 5th grade classrooms.

Title: Math Manipulatives

Grade level: 5

Amount: \$102

Description: This grant purchases class sets of math materials for use in the two 5th grade general education classrooms.

Title: PBIS Conference

Target: K–6

Amount: \$75

Description: This grant pays part of the cost for MP's Family Advocate to attend a Positive Behavior conference, where she will learn to develop and implement positive behavior interventions that will benefit students across all grade levels.

Title: K-2 Reading Block Materials

Grade level: K–2

Amount: \$50

Description: This grant buys some equipment—toobaloos and fluency timers—to support the K–2 reading block activities. Additional materials will be purchased with building funds.

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

Oh, the Places They'll Go!



Sophia Koonz
Brookside Elementary



Shoreline Public Schools
Foundation

Please join the
Shoreline Public Schools
Foundation

**Spring Event
March 28, 2013**

Breakfast: 7 - 8 a.m.
or Lunch: noon - 1 p.m.
The Shoreline Room
18560 1st Ave NE

Join parents, teachers and
staff, and community
members as we celebrate
our work to help make
Shoreline Public Schools
one of the top-rated districts
in the state!

\$50 per seat/ \$400 table of 8

RSVP by March 18
SPSF office: 206-393-4107
or online:
www.shorelinefoundation.org

Getting School Ready!

Join us for an evening of reading fun!

Thursdays March 7, April 4, and May 2 from 6:00–7:30pm at the Shoreline Children's Center, 1900 N 170th Shoreline, WA 98133. "Partners in Print" events are designed to:

- Prepare and empower parents to help their children become confident, successful readers
- Teach parents ways to become a positive force in their child's literacy development
- Provide practical ideas for how parents can help at home

Preregistration for each event is required to plan for meals and materials. To register, contact Marilyn Enloe at marilyn.enloe@shorelineschools.org. These events are for parents and caregivers of children 7 years old and younger, and involve interactive activities for adults and children.

Dinner will be provided. FREE!!!

Meridian park Neighborhood News

On Thursday, March 14 from 7:00–8:00pm, the Meridian Park Neighborhood is having a free Ice Cream Social in the Meridian Park cafeteria. Everyone is invited.

On April 16 from 7:00–9:00pm, the three neighborhoods of Meridian Park, North City, and Echo Lake will host three panelists from light rail stations that have already been built to help us to learn what to expect in our community. This is the beginning of many meetings on light rail. Light rail in our community is a long way off (10 years), but planning is well under way.


May 18 is the Annual Embrace Meridian Park School (9:00am–12:00pm). Bring your garden gloves and tools if you have them. Bring a friend to help. Some tools will be provided. Water, cookies, and treats will be provided.

Child Find

If you have concerns about your child's development, the Shoreline School District offers developmental screenings at no charge for children birth-5 who live within the district boundaries and are suspected of having a disability.

For children birth-2 years old, call Wonderland Development Center at 206-364-3777. For children 3-5 years old, call the Early Childhood Education Program at 206-393-4250.

A Shoreline PTA Council Family Resource



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*

The Cheetah Chatter is Published Monthly by
Meridian Park School and the Meridian Park PTSA

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

Hillery Clark, Early Childhood

Program Manager

Diane Randall, Office Manager

Jill Gwazdauskas, Registrar

Janet Boyett, School Nurse

Annie Gage, Family Advocate

2011–12 MP PTSA
Executive Committee

www.MeridianParkPTSA.org

Brian Heagler, President

email: bheagler@gmail.com

Rachel Ariss, VP Program

Adrienne Thompson, VP Events

Janina Pacunski, Secretary

Krista Keller & Tracey Poole, Co-Treasurers

Adrienne Thompson, Legislative Chair

Mel Williamson & Mary Crandell,
Cheetah Chatter Editors