



Cheetah Chatter

Published by Meridian Park School & Meridian Park PTSA



The Fall Carnival is October 26!

Join us for our annual school carnival on Friday, October 26, from 6:00-8:00pm. Pizza and drinks will be for sale to help **raise money for 6th grade camp. We'll have a pie social, music, and games galore!** Feel free to wear costumes!

Volunteers are greatly appreciated to make this event a success.

Please let us know if you can help:

- Volunteer to run a game in the gym or serve pie
- Donate a pie for the pie social
- Donate candy bars for game prizes

Volunteer sign up boards will be available in the school lobby in October, or you can contact Dixie Yamane (dixyamane@yahoo.com) or Susan Duthweiler (sduthweiler@gmail.com).

Friday, October 26, 2012
6:00-8:00pm
Meridian Park Elementary



Issue Two, 2012–2013
October 10, 2012

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Upcoming Events

October 10
PTSA Fall Fundraiser Kickoff

October 10–12
Parent / Teacher Conferences

October 10–12
Scholastic Book Fair
MP Library

October 15
Highly Capable Program
Information Night
Shoreline Center

October 26
Fall Carnival

November 12
No School—
Veteran's Day Holiday

November 14–15
Talent show auditions

November 21
Early Release

November 22–23
No School—
Thanksgiving Holiday

Day of Caring at Meridian Park

Big thanks to our United Way Day of Caring volunteers from Eagleview Technology. This amazing group helped us with the change-over to Reading Counts in the library and then guided students through the annual Walk-a-thon. Over 150 hours of volunteer work done in one day!

Thank
You



Volunteers Can Do Anything!

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



Meridian Park News

Principal's Letter

Dear Meridian Park Families,

We are in full swing at Meridian Park! Thanks for such a wonderful start to the new school year. Classrooms are buzzing with activities, field trips have begun, our PTSA fundraiser is gearing up and we are truly off to a great start! Thank you for your support of our school Walk-a-thon—we are still accepting donations if you have not already contributed to this Student Council fundraiser. We greatly appreciate it!

Since the start of school, we have added a few more staff to our community. Please join me in welcoming Trilby Cohen as the **.5 teacher in Mr. Lockwood's third grade classroom and James Lakey as our new Head Night Custodian.** Liz Bentley, our half-day Kindergarten teacher will also take on additional teaching duties **as a .2 teacher in Ms. Woodward's 2/3 classroom each afternoon.** We will also be hiring soon for a .4 teaching position in Ms. **Quezada's 5th grade classroom.** **Lastly, during the next few weeks,** we will say goodbye to a dearly beloved member of our school community. Roxie Brendible, our fabulous office manager for 12 years at Meridian Park, has been recruited to our central office and will take the position of Career and Technical Education Specialist. I can speak for all of us when I say that we will miss her tremendously here at Meridian Park. Personally, I have felt so fortunate to have such a wonderful, dedicated and extremely skilled person working besides me in the office for my entire time as Principal. She will always be a special part of the Meridian Park community and will be sorely missed.

Over the past three weeks, our teachers have worked hard assessing all of our students at each grade level in math and reading. At conferences, you may hear the acronyms DIBELS, easyCBM, SRI or CORE. These are some of the many words for our district screening tools/ assessment measures that we use to

help us know where students are academically in relation to their peers. These results guide our daily instruction and intervention planning for our students along the way. It has been a lot of work but very worthwhile!

On the October 5 non-student day, our K–6 teachers were busy learning our new science curriculum. This fall, our staff will also work together to reflect on student progress from last year as well as the results from our spring 2012 state assessment, the MSP (Measure of Student Progress). These results are posted on our District Web site as well as the OSP (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction) Web site. We did very well but we still have more work to do to ensure that every student reaches or exceeds standard. Each year, we write our school goals centered on the **improvement of our students' academic achievement in math and reading.** For our reading focus, we are excited to begin our primary grades reading block program and to continue our Comprehension Toolkit program alignment in K–6. For math, our teachers are excited to dig deeper in their use of the Envision Math Program and become even more intentional about looking **more deeply and frequently at students' math progress on benchmark tests and unit tests.** It is exciting and important work.

As we head into October, I look forward to seeing many of you during conference week and at the fun Fall Carnival on October 26. Thank you for all of your help with this new school year. We appreciate the time and energy you give to your child at school **and at home. We couldn't do our jobs without your support.**

Here's to a fabulous fall!

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

Looking for a Preschool?

Do you have a three-year-old who would like to come to preschool at Meridian Park? We are accepting applications to our peer model program in our developmental preschool. Please call 206-393-4250 to schedule a tour.

Pay for Lunch with a Credit Card

Did you know that you can pay for your child's school lunches with a credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover)? For information, call 206-393-4101.

Don't Forget to Bring in Your Box Tops!

Thank you for all of those box tops and labels that are pouring in! Please continue to collect and bring them to school.

There are other ways to donate to Meridian Park without spending any extra cash:

- You can sync Meridian Park Elementary to your Target Red Card, Safeway Club Card, or your Alberson's Preferred Savings Card
- Visit www.btfе.com for a variety of online benefits to support Meridian Park

Questions?
krista_keller@comcast.net
Thanks for your support!!



www.BTFE.com

Meridian Park News

MP's Backyard is Complete!

If you didn't notice, our backyard is absolutely beautiful! The new elementary field is the most gorgeous one in Shoreline! We held a ribbon cutting ceremony on the first day of school with Cascadia K-8 School and our district leaders to celebrate our new field.

We are so excited for our children to play in such a beautiful space. The majority of the field is natural grass with some small portions of synthetic turf insets to help prolong the useful life of typically well worn areas—come see the green grass!



What's Cookin'?

Fresh From the Shoreline Central Kitchen

It has been a busy summer for Kathy Walker, Food and Nutrition Services Manager for the Shoreline School District, and her team. They have been working extra hard to reformulate and create new recipes to comply with the new USDA school nutrition guidelines. All of the new regulations mean good news for Shoreline students! They will see an increase in the availability of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains while sodium and saturated fats will be reduced. There are also now per-lunch minimum and maximum calorie counts:

K-6 grades = 550-650 calories (formerly 650 minimum)

7-8 grades = 600-700 (formerly 750 minimum)

9-12 grades = 750-850 (formerly 850 minimum)

Because of new USDA regulations, the district's meal planning has switched from Nutrient-Based Menu Planning to Food-Based Menu Planning. This means that although calories, fat, and nutrients are still important to keep track of, we want students to focus on what foods they are putting into their bodies, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and teaching them about the components of a healthy meal. The new guidelines require that five components be available to students at lunch and that they must take three, including at least one vegetable and/or fruit. During the first week of school, members **of the district's Healthy Lifestyles Committee volunteered at** school cafeterias during lunch to help the students understand this change.

Because of the change in guidelines, students will no longer be able to purchase two servings of pizza, hot dogs, fish nuggets, beef and bean nachos, or shrimp poppers. There will be at least four other side items available to enjoy with each entree, so hungry students will have plenty of options to choose from. Students will be able to continue buying two servings of items such as corn dogs, fiesta chicken burrito, chicken teriyaki and rice, veggie chili, veggie lasagna, and bean-and-cheese burrito.

Exciting things are planned for fall! Last year, Lake Forest Park piloted a salad bar for a month and it was a huge success! In October, salad bars will be launching in elementary schools and more variety will be added to existing salad bars in other schools. Some of the additions include spinach, cauliflower, garbanzo beans, cottage cheese, red pepper, red onion, and another dressing option. More foods are being made from scratch, so stay

tuned for a taste test of Italian meat sauce with whole-wheat penne coming to an elementary school near you!

Desserts have almost disappeared from the menu but Kathy and her team are beginning to rework recipes for Pirate Cake and the beloved chocolate cake so that they contain more whole grains.

To meet the new standards, Shoreline's bread items must be 50% whole grain rich and next year contain 100% whole grain. Kathy is ahead of schedule as items currently on the menu plan where whole grain is a main ingredient contain 75% whole grain.

The Food and Nutrition Department is excited for these changes and looks forward to the challenges of complying with the new guidelines. Please feel free to call Kathy for more information at 206-393-4207 and if you have time, please join your child for lunch one day and let us know what you think about these changes.

Interested in the Reserved Meridian 'Park'-ing Spot?

It could be yours for a week!

For a \$25 donation, you will be able to park your vehicle in its very own designated parking spot! Ms. Jessee has generously sacrificed her own administrative parking spot to aid in the **fundraising efforts for this year's 6th grade camp.**

Your \$25 enables you to park from Monday morning through Friday after-school pick up. You will receive your very own parking permit and your spot will be reserved every day of your week by the fabulous Meridian Park patrols.

Parents wishing to take advantage of this offer must send their \$25 donation one week in advance. This will ensure that other drivers have the opportunity to use this spot, should **circumstances change for the original driver. We'd like to fill as many weeks as possible.**

More details and a sign up book will be available in the lobby area. Leave those parking blues behind you while supporting the awesomeness that is the 6th grade camp of 2013!

Meridian Park News

Families, Friends, and Feelings

notes from Annie Gage, Meridian Park Family Advocate

Cheetah C.H.A.M.P.S.!

CHAMPS stands for Children Have Amazing Mentor/Parent Support!

Would you like to be more involved with Meridian Park, but **your schedule won't allow it? Maybe you can take part in our** new program called C.H.A.M.P.S.: Children Have Awesome Mentor/Parent Support.

As a CHAMP, you only have to commit to one full day at Meridian Park. You will be on the playground, at lunch with your student, and in classrooms, including that of your child. As a CHAMP, you will be one other adult with whom children can have positive interactions and learning moments, and you will hand out Cheetah Cheers to kids who you see following our Meridian Park behavioral expectations.

We believe you will find your day as a CHAMP invigorating, rewarding, and enjoyable!

If you would like to participate, or need more information before you decide, please contact me at 206-393-1768 or annie.gage@shorelineschools.org.

Let's Make Birthdays Happy for Everyone

This is a friendly reminder to have a birthday party etiquette chat with your children. I have often observed kids talk about a birthday party they are having, or were invited to, in front of children who were not invited.

That experience was no fun for the non-invited **back in the '60s** when I was in elementary school. Many things have changed **since then, but hurt feelings at being left out aren't one of them.** Teaching kids to be tactful about this wonderful childhood tradition is a simple step toward keeping the school environment friendly and inclusive.

This is all your children need to know to help keep the "happy" in Happy Birthday:

Invite guests by phone, computer, or snail-mail: Do not send invitations via your child at school. Along with the potential for hurt feelings when you do, party invitations are just too exciting and potentially disruptive to the learning environment.

Guide your child to keep all birthday party conversations off school grounds unless they are inviting everyone involved in the conversation.

Babies on Board!

Last year, Meridian Park piloted Roots of Empathy (ROE) in our two 1st grade classrooms. ROE is an evidence-based program that has shown a dramatic effect in reducing levels of aggression among school children while raising social and emotional competence and increasing empathy.

At the heart of the program are an infant and parent who visit a classroom nine times over the school year.

This year, Meridian Park has five young "teachers" joining us through ROE in three 3rd grade classrooms and two 1st grade classrooms. Joining me as instructors are Erin Dragovich and Meridian Park parent Karli Larson.

Stay tuned for more pictures of our youngest teachers and stories of their latest achievements!



Meridian Park News

Free Developmental Screenings

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

For children birth–two years old, please call Wonderland Development Center at 206-364-3777. For children three-five years old, please call the Early Childhood Education Program at 206-393-4250.

Come Play!

Play and Learn, staffed through Wonderland Development Center, hosts a Play and Learn activity time for one-to-five year-olds in our Little Gym every Monday from 10:00-11:00am. Please come and play!

It is a delightful place and a great way to get to know other parents with young children.

Reporting Attendance

If your child is going to be out of school, please e-mail jill.gwazdauskas@shorelineschools.org or call 206-393-4252 no later than 9:30am on the day of absence. Let us know your **child's name, the date of absence, and the reason for the absence.**

An unexcused absence will be recorded for your child if we are not notified of the absence and the reason for it.

Highly Capable Program Testing for 2012–2013

The Highly Capable Program (HiCap) staff will host a Parent Information Night for families considering the program. This will be on Monday, October 15, 2012, 7:00–8:00 pm in the Shoreline Room at the Shoreline Center.

Visit the Programs area of www.shorelineschools.org for more information on the HiCap program.

Library Notes

a message from Jenny Hillger, Library Media Specialist

Scholastic's *To the Book Fair and Beyond!* book fair is on now, during parent/teacher conferences. The book fair profits benefit Meridian Park students. We hope to see everyone at the fall Scholastic Book Fair!

Wednesday–Friday
October 12–14, 2012
8:45am–4:00pm
MP Library



The Cheetah Gym

a message from Pamela Willoughby, P.E. Teacher

What's Happening in PE?

We have just finished soccer skills, and are working on tossing and catching in soft lacrosse. We will revisit soccer later in the year.

Indoors, we're playing "Capture the Chickens and Pigs" and other tag games. October includes Fitness Gram activities to prepare for testing grades 3–6. Grades K–2 also practice the fun activities for future testing.

Fitness Gram activities include pushups, crunches or curl-ups, bent arm hang (timed), and PACE testing (running lines). We'll try the half mile and mile if I can measure a good course outside (we do not have a track). Sit and Reach is another flexibility test.

Running Club

On October 26, our Meridian Park Nationals Running Team will bus to Hamlin Park (16006 15th Ave NE) to run a mile or half mile with six other schools. The team is ordering their t-shirts and will wear bright colors during the race. The races begin at 4:00pm. Parking will be difficult—there is additional parking north of Hamlin Park (if you want to park at the race start, plan to arrive no later than 3:10pm). At least four or five busses will be parking at the race.

Let's have a safe and fun-filled October!

PTSA News

Welcome Coffees a Success!

Our annual PTSA Welcome Coffees were a big success again this year. **As a way to help families transition on their children's first day of school**, we offer coffee and snacks and answer some general questions regarding our wonderful school.

Thank you to Starbucks (18336 Midvale Ave. N.) for generously donating coffee for new and returning families on both mornings.

Yearbook Club Sign-Up Sheets Coming Soon!

Keep an eye on your Boomerang for the sign-up sheet for Yearbook Club! Help create the Meridian Park yearbook from start to finish, including shooting and editing photos, choosing content and design, promoting and selling the finished product and so much more!

Yearbook Club will meet Friday afternoons beginning November 2 and ending in April. Bring your ideas and creativity and be prepared to work hard and have fun! Questions? Contact Lori Heagler at lori.heagler@gmail.com.

Reflections Art Projects

This year's Reflections theme is "The Magic of a Moment..."

Reflections is a National PTA and WSPTA cultural arts competition. Students can submit pieces in any or all of the following six categories: Dance/Choreography, Film Production, Literature, Musical Composition, Photography, and Visual Arts.

All submissions are due to the Meridian Park office no later than end of day on Monday, October 22. An art walk and **reception will be held in the children's honor in November**. Artists with submissions in the Dance/Choreography, Film Production, Literature, and Musical Composition categories may be asked to perform or present their pieces at this reception. All participants will receive a ribbon.

More information about Reflections is available on the MP PTSA Web site at www.meridianparkptsa.org, in the Meridian Park foyer and at www.wastatepta.org.

Questions? Contact Jennifer Combs (combs47@comcast.net or 206-718-0057).



MP Drama Kids!

MP Drama Kids (grades 1–3) will begin Monday, October 15 from 3:30–5:00pm. Kids can explore theater through dramatic play, games, costumes, and props. At the end of six classes, the kids will present an original one-act musical based **on Disney's Jungle Book in full costume**.

Tuition is \$65. You can register online at www.dandylyondrama.com. Questions? Contact Melani Lyons of Dandylyon Drama (melanilyons@comcast.net) or Susan Duthweiler, Meridian Park PTSA (sduthweiler@gmail.com).

What is the PTSA All About?

Are you curious to know what the PTSA is all about or what the PTSA does? To find out, please join us at 6:30pm on Tuesday, November 6 in the Meridian Park library. Get involved or just **sit quietly and find out what's happening around Meridian Park**.

We are a very active PTSA and offer several programs and clubs, as well as classroom support for our wonderful teachers.

Questions? Please e-mail PTSA Secretary Janina Pacunski at jpacunski@yahoo.com.

Mandarin Chinese Classes

Classes for both continuing and beginning students are now available!

Two classes per week are available for continuing students with previous Chinese language experience. Classes are Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:00–9:00am.

The beginner class is enrolling new students. Parent volunteers are needed only if the class goes over size. Class is Thursdays from 3:35–4:35pm, beginning October 2.

Mrs. Zhang teaches not only the Chinese language and characters, but also the rich and evolving Chinese history, customs, and traditions. She makes use of various Chinese textbooks and learning materials, and has developed her own teaching materials and curriculum for students of different Chinese language levels. In addition, she shared Chinese costumes from the fan dance, dragon dance, and lion dance with her students and developed a variety of activities to enrich the learning experience.

For more information or a sign-up form, contact Mrs. Zhang at huazhang98@yahoo.com.

Legislative Updates

Richmond Beach Community Association
Candidates Forum
October 9, 7:00pm
Richmond Beach Congregational Church
1512 NW 195th Street

This is an opportunity for the community to learn what prospective office holders will do to better serve the needs of Richmond Beach. All candidates for state, local, and judicial races have been invited.

Washington State PTA Legislative Assembly
October 19–20
SeaTac, WA

This is the Statewide Legislative Assembly to develop our statewide legislative platform and to learn how to effectively advocate for children at all levels.

Election Day

Let your voice be heard—cast your vote in the upcoming General Election on November 6!

Join our PTSA

Together We Can Accomplish More

We're off to a good start with 130 members joining in the month of September. Winners of our drawing were Gabrielle Trimbell (2 tickets to the Meridian Park Drama Production) and Veronica Cook (a coupon to purchase books at the **October Book Fair**). **Let's keep our PTSA strong**—become a member and help us reach our goal of 300.

We've also started a Grandparents' Club—thank you to all the grandparents who have joined! If you need a membership form or have questions, contact Ann Yee at theyeefamily@hotmail.com.

First Art Docent Project This Month

During the month of October, the volunteer art docents will present a lesson and project in our classrooms about the life and works of the artist Jacob Lawrence.

Students will be asked to think of the favorite activity they did this summer with family or friends and to tell the story in their piece. These pieces will be coming home by the end of October.

Lawrence found inspiration in everyday life and in events from history. He painted many groupings of paintings in a series to tell a larger story. Jacob Lawrence is known for his ability to tell stories through his work. He only uses a few shapes and colors and still succeeds in getting his story across.



Calligraphy class for 3rd graders in Ms. Parks' room—calligraphy lessons for 3rd graders have been held every year at Meridian Park since 2006

We're Giving Money Away!

And you can help! Each year, the PTSA Grants Committee reviews applications from Meridian Park teachers for exciting, creative projects they want to do with our kids.

It's the committee's job to decide which projects to fund. We have slots for a few new committee members this year. The time commitment is small: just one meeting in the fall and one in the spring (with refreshments!), in addition to reading the applications.

Please contact Jodi Forschmiedt (jodi@jodiwrites.com) if you are able to help make Meridian Park even better!

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

HopeLink ELL Classes at Briarcrest

Free evening English classes for adults start in November at Briarcrest Elementary, 2715 NE 158th Street, Shoreline, 98155. Classes are Mondays and Thursdays from 6:30–8:30pm.

Attend an orientation on October 29 or November 1 from 6:30-8:30 at Briarcrest Elementary.

Questions? 425-250-3007. For more information, visit adulthoodeducation.hope-link.org/students/ESL.

Power of One Volunteers

Thank you for all you do for Meridian Park!



Kindergarteners Learning the Ropes

Getting their backpacks together and learning the rules of the playground.



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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Meridian Park Elementary

[schools.shorelineschools.org/
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