

# Parent Handbook

## 2014-2015



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The Meridian School Promotes a balance of mind and heart,  
contemplation and action, of individuality  
and commitment to the community

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## MISSION

The Meridian School promotes a balance of mind and heart, of contemplation and action, of individuality and a commitment to the community.

## PHILOSOPHY

The Meridian School is a place where the joy of childhood infuses the excitement of learning. By integrating curriculum, character, and community, we provide the foundation for well-rounded students.

Curriculum should challenge, engage and inspire students. At Meridian, we provide an excellent academic education in which the joy of childhood infuses the excitement of learning.

Character is built upon integrity, compassion, and responsibility. At Meridian, students are guided toward self-discipline and thoughtful decisions, mindful of themselves, others and their environment.

Community is the heart of a school. At Meridian, all students, staff and families are known and valued. We strive to create a diverse, equitable and inclusive culture. Our connections are strengthened through close student-teacher relationships, strong parent involvement, and active engagement with our local and global communities.

Education is not just about teaching students to achieve. It's also about what a child thinks and feels. At Meridian, we provide a solid academic foundation with sensitivity toward the internal lives of our students. Our goal is that students leave Meridian confident, capable, and well prepared for the next phase of their academic lives.

## NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

The Meridian School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, and any other legally protected status to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, or any other legally protected status in the administration of our educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## HISTORY: Over 65 Years of Growth & Change

- 1946:** Perkins School for Children, a preschool and kindergarten, opened its doors for the first time. Mrs. E. Louise Perkins was founder and owner of Perkins School for Children, originally located in the Ravenna district.
- 1976:** Perkins Elementary School, original name of Meridian, was founded by Betty Lea. Perkins Elementary operated for many years as the elementary school of Perkins School for Children. It began as a small school of approximately 30 students in grades one and two. Meridian now has nearly 190 students in grades kindergarten through five.
- 1978:** Perkins Elementary received its 501(c)(3) status, effectively changing the school from a proprietary business to a nonprofit institution governed by a board of directors.
- 1981:** Perkins Elementary moved to the Good Shepherd Center. Classes were located in the main building. The school shared the gymnasium with Pacific Northwest Ballet.
- 1982–83:** Parent Association was formed.
- 1986–87:** The final year for sixth grade, due to public middle school changes in grade levels.
- 1987:** First Orff musical instruments were purchased in memory of Mrs. Perkins.
- 1989:** Renovated the South Annex.
- 1990–91:** Renovated the gym. Capital Campaign to renovate the gym began with a goal of raising \$125,000. The campaign started with \$17,000 in funds from the auction and contributions of \$10,000 from the board of trustees.
- 1990:** PNAIS (now NWAIS) evaluation – accredited with PNAIS (NWAIS) and NASC.
- 1992:** First Annual Fund Drive.
- 1994:** Expanded into the North Annex space.
- 1995–96:** Welcomed our first kindergarten class.
- 1997:** Changed name to The Meridian School.
- 2001–02:** 25th year celebration!
- 2002:** New playground planned and constructed at Meridian Park.
- 2004:** Ellen Toole, Director, retired after 25 years with Perkins Elementary/The Meridian School.
- 2005:** Ron Waldman arrived as new Head of School.
- 2006:** Remodeled main hallway, third and fourth grade classrooms. Developed new logo, mission, and philosophy.
- 2006:** Meridian began its Global Studies Program.
- 2007:** Remodeled South Annex kindergarten rooms, adopted 2008–2012 strategic plan. Remodeled South Annex first grade classrooms and music room. Re-accredited by NWAIS.
- 2011-12:** Meridian celebrated its 35th anniversary. Ron Waldman, Head of School, retired after 8 years with The Meridian School.
- 2013-14:** Jack Shea arrives as new Head of School.

# SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

The Meridian School is a fully accredited member of the [Northwest Association of Independent Schools](#) (NWAIS). Our continued membership involves self-evaluation, observations, documentation of policies and procedures, and review of goals and philosophy. NWAIS is a Northwest-oriented association concerned with the academic programs and progress of qualified independent schools. Its purpose is to assist schools in fulfilling their mission to provide high-quality education for children by promoting and protecting the independence of our schools, by representing the interests of our schools, and by fostering collegial relationships and ethical leadership within our schools. It also serves as a liaison between member organizations and the National Association of Independent Schools.

## Core values of NWAIS include

- Independence
- Free and open inquiry
- Commitment to diversity
- Ongoing school improvement
- Collegial relationships and ethical leadership

## Essential characteristics of NWAIS schools include

- Commitment to the public good
- Effective governance and operations
- Physical location or place
- Primary focus of academic education
- Commitment to the best interests of children

The Meridian School is also a member of the [National Association of Independent Schools](#) (NAIS), the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC), Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC), and the Board of Education.

The purposes of NASC are to

- Advance the cause of education in the schools and colleges of the Northwest
- Develop educational policies and activities that will extend and improve educational opportunities and services
- Develop criteria of evaluation that will continuously stimulate, evaluate, and accredit vital educational efforts
- Promote cooperative relationships among colleges and schools in order to attain these ends

# FACULTY & STAFF

## Administration

**Jack Shea** Head of School

BS Wildlife Biology, MS Wildlife Ecology  
with the Meridian School since 2013

**Elizabeth Sorby** Interim Assistant Head of School and  
Director of Customized Learning

EdS School Psychology, Med School Counseling  
with the Meridian School since 2013

**Elizabeth Anderson** Interim Assistant Head of School

BA Economics, MA Reading & Teacher Leadership  
Principal certificate & K-8 teaching certificate  
with the Meridian School since 2014

**Nicole Caden** Director of Admissions and Marketing

BA Arts and Sciences  
with the Meridian School since 2012

**Erin Ruddock** Admissions Associate

BS Organizational & Community Leadership  
with the Meridian School since 2013

**Nick De Vogel** IT Systems Manager

BA Communications, Certified WA State Career and Tech.  
Ed. Teaching Certificate  
with the Meridian School since 2011

**Doug Coppinger** Director of Enrichment, Extended Day,  
Athletics and Summer Programs

MA Human Development  
with the Meridian School since 1998

**Marilyn Easton** Director of Development

BA Communications and Advertising  
with the Meridian School since 1988

**Holly Johnson** Development Associate

BS Occupational Therapy  
Meridian Auction Chair-4 years  
with the Meridian School since 2013

**Diane Gordon** Director of Finance

BA Business Administration  
with the Meridian School since 2007

**Nancy Reed** Accounting Assistant

Associates Degree  
with the Meridian School since 2008

**Joan Reynolds** Main Office Coordinator

with the Meridian School since 1981

**Sandra Shore**, Ext. Day & Summer Program Supervisor

BA Vocal Performance  
with the Meridian School since 2008

**Yaneth Vrentas** Director of Equity and Inclusion  
and Spanish Instructor

BA Communication, MA Human Resources Management  
with the Meridian School since 2000

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## Specialists

**Mary Allen** Computers

BS Elementary Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2005

**Emilia Kister** Music

Bachelor of Music in Music Education, MA in Music  
Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2014

**Jose Rodriguez** Spanish Instructor

Bachelors in Law, Master in Teaching (Spanish)  
with the Meridian School since 2014

**Larissa Weber** Customized Learning Associate

BA Political Science and Sociology, MA Science in Urban  
Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2012

**Linda Barnes** Neo Art School

BA English and Art Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2013

**Regis Thevenet** Physical Education

Institute of Paris, Sports  
with the Meridian School since 1980

**Claudia Sibila** Math Coach

BA Mathematics, MA English, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2006

**Paula Palmer** Library

BA Anthropology, MA Librarianship, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2007

## FACULTY & STAFF cont.

### Faculty

**Elizabeth Bode** Kindergarten

BA Elementary Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2010

**Sean Carroll** Kindergarten

BS Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2014

**Beth Vineyard** First Grade

BS Biology, MA Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2012

**Kennedy White** First Grade

BA Communication, MEd, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2014

**Jackie Hughes** Second Grade

BA Education, MEd Educational Leadership  
with the Meridian School since 2013

**Nancy White** Second Grade

BA Political Science, MEd Elementary Education,  
Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2005

**Drew Whittemore** Third Grade

BA History, MEd Elementary Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2011

**Andrea Yee** Third Grade

BA Education, MEd Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2013

**Charlie Burkland** Fourth Grade

BA Communication, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2009

**Ben Mohr** Fourth Grade

BS Elementary Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2005

**Meredith Ward** Fifth Grade

BA Sociology, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 1982

**Jason Profit** Fifth Grade

BA English, Masters in Teaching, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2010

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### Associate Faculty

**Ramiza Saheed** Kindergarten

BA Education, Masters in Teaching, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2008

**Sean Donoghue-Neider** First Grade

Associate of Arts  
with the Meridian School since 2007

**Lydia Laurent** Second Grade

BS Biology, MEd Teaching  
with the Meridian School since 2013

**Lori Van Etta** Third Grade

BA Liberal Studies/Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 1989

**Laura Schaut** Third Grade

BA Elementary Education, Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2010

**Jen Coll** Fourth Grade

BA Geography and Environmental Studies,  
Certified Teacher  
with the Meridian School since 2014

**Emily Anderson** Fifth Grade

BA Anthropology  
with the Meridian School since 2014

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Meridian School board of trustees was formally established in February 1987, replacing the board of directors and corporate officers. The board is responsible for fiduciary oversight and governance of the school. The board meets monthly during the academic year and comprises the following members:

Jennifer Zell, Chair	Current & Alumni Parent	Finance
Sandy Aslanian, Vice-Chair	Current & Alumni Parent	Education
Dan Raymond, Treasurer	Current & Alumni Parent	Finance
Katie Renschler, Secretary	Current & Alumni Parent	Education
Lesley Todaro	Current & Alumni Parent	Family Therapy
Ronnie Cunningham	Current & Alumni Parent	Family Therapy
Ruth Frantz	Alumnus	Journalism
Barb French	Alumni Parent	Biology
Maria Gingerich	Current & Alumni Parent	Strategy Consultant
Rebecca Moe	Current & Alumni Parent	Education
Gary Peterman	Alumni Parent	Biotech
Ted Kalmus	Head of Billings Middle School	Education
Haeryung Shin	Current Parent	Law
Sonja Gustafson, Emeritus	Alumni Parent	Consultant
Harold Malkin, Emeritus	Alumni Parent	Law
Barb Richardson, Emeritus	Alumni Parent	Statistics/Research

## BOARD COMMITTEES

**The Committee on Trustees** determines and evaluates the composition of the Board and its leadership, takes responsibility for policy and by-laws, and leads the ongoing effort to support the growth and development of the Board and its individual members.

**The Development Committee** oversees all fundraising activities of the school, both long-range and annual, and oversees the advancement of the school into the broader community.

**The Diversity Committee** provides leadership and guidance in developing an inclusive and welcoming learning and working environment and oversees the implementation of the Board's vision for diversity.

**The Executive Committee** is comprised of the Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and Head of School serves as a sounding Board for the head, and addresses, on behalf of the Board, issues requiring urgent attention between meetings.

**The Facilities Committee** develops and executes short and long-term plans related to the construction, lease, repair, and maintenance of the physical plant.

**The Finance Committee** develops the long-range financial plan and yearly operational budget of the school, and oversees investments, audits, and financial policies of the school.

**The Marketing Committee** works with the Director of Marketing to develop, execute and evaluate short and long term marketing objectives.



# PARENT ASSOCIATION

Welcome to Meridian's Parent Association! As a Meridian parent, you're a member of the Parent Association. Our mission is to facilitate parent volunteer activities for the betterment of the school and its community. The P.A. promotes parent involvement in the school community by supporting teachers and staff along with organizing school activities and programs. It facilitates communication among parents, teachers, and school administrators to explore issues of mutual interest, sponsors speakers on educational topics, and provides a structure for assisting the school with certain fundraising and social functions.

## Parent Association Activities

The Parent Association sponsors the special events listed below. These events enrich, entertain, and enlighten all of the members of the Meridian community, and they provide a great opportunity for parents to get to know each other. The Parent Association provides excellent networking opportunities for parents, as well as a forum for learning more about Meridian. Parent Association meetings and get-togethers are a wonderful mix of business and fun! Many parents use their Parent Association network to brainstorm child-rearing challenges—from lunches and lost coats to homework and social skills.

## Parent Association Forums

All parents are invited to attend Parent Association forums that cover topics of interest to parents. Marilyn Easton, Development Director, attends P.A. meetings and is the liaison between the P.A. and the Administration.

## Parent Association Events 2014-2015

The events listed below are either coordinated or supported by The Meridian School Parent Association. In addition, the P.A. will host informative gatherings or forums during the year to address topics of interest to the parent community.

<b>2014</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Hosted by</b>
September 2	All-School Picnic	P.A. 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
September 3	Welcome Back Coffee	P.A.
September 11	New Family Coffee	P.A. & Development Team
September 22	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Potluck	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
September 30	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Potluck	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade
October 7	Kindergarten Potluck	Kindergarten
October 13	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Potluck	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
October 24	Grandparents/Special Friends Day	P.A. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
October 25	Fall Carnival	P.A.
November 4	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Potluck	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade
November 12	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Potluck	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade
December 4	Prospective Family Open House	P.A. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
December 6	All-School Family Ice Skating Party	P.A.

<b>2015</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Hosted by</b>
January 23	Family Movie Night	P.A.
March 17	Prospective Parent Breakfast	P.A. Kindergarten
March 21	The Meridian School Auction	The Meridian School
May 6	Staff Appreciation Luncheon	P.A. 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade
June 5	Track Meet & Field Day	The Meridian School
June 9	All-School Picnic	The Meridian School
June 12	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Reception	P.A. 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade

### **Parent Association Executive Committee**

The Parent Association Executive Committee works together—and with the administration—to manage the Parent Association’s overall operations and budget. The Parent Association Executive Committee (PAEC) meets monthly to plan Parent Association events, set the calendar, and monitor the budget. For general questions or more information about the Parent Association, please email us at [christian.reynolds@gmail.com](mailto:christian.reynolds@gmail.com)

### **The Parent Association Executive Committee (2014-2015)**

- President, Christian Reynolds
- Vice President, Cindy Ostermeyer
- Treasurer, Haeryung Shin
- Communications Coordinator, Sarah Gire
- All-School Event Coordinator, Emily Raymond
- Grade Level Event Coordinator, Emily Raymond
- Community Building Team Leader, Bonnie Tilghman
- Community Service Team Leader, Kirstin Frits
- Teacher/Staff Appreciation Team Leader, Missy Ponder-Reston

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Absences

All students are expected to be prompt and regular in school attendance unless prevented from doing so by illness or other serious cause. If your child is to be absent or tardy, please call the school office (206-632-7154) before 9:30 a.m. If the office does not receive a call, you may expect a call from them. We encourage families to schedule special trips and personal activities at a time other than school days.

## Attendance

The school day starts at 8:30 a.m. Classroom doors open at 8:15 a.m. Kindergarten through second grade ends at 3:00 p.m. Third through fifth grades end at 3:15 p.m. (See “Dismissal” for end-of-day routine.) Prior to 8:15 a.m., children on campus should be supervised in the Extended Day program. Children arriving after 8:30 a.m. or leaving early must check in or out at the office with the adult that is accompanying them. Students arriving late or leaving early will be counted as being absent for a portion of the day.

**If anyone other than a parent or guardian is to pick up your child, written notice must be on file with the office. If you need before- or after-school care due to a special circumstance, please be sure to have a credit balance on your Extended Day account.**

## Class Assignments

Class assignments for the following year are made by the teachers and administration before the end of the current school year, and parents are notified prior to the last day of school. In the spring, we ask parents to share information with the Assistant Head of School and the placement team about their child that will assist us in our class placement process; however, we do not accept requests for specific teachers.

## Clothing

Children should wear clothing appropriate for the daily activities, including shoes they can safely run in. Parents should label all children’s caps, coats, sweatshirts, mittens, etc. This labeling will save money and frustration over lost belongings. Children are asked to bring an inexpensive, labeled pair of gym shoes to be kept at school to preserve our gym floor.

## Dismissal

Parents should pick up kindergarten, first, and second grade children at 3:00 p.m. at the front steps of the building. Parents can pick up third, fourth, and fifth grade children starting at 3:15.

Parents and carpools who have children from both groups (K-1-2 and 3-4-5) should pick up as close to 3:15 p.m. as possible. Students wait by the front steps of the main building to be picked up. To expedite pickup, drivers should have car doors unlocked and should pull forward so that two cars may be loaded at a time. Staff will help children into cars. If the student is not ready to be picked up, the driver must proceed around the circle and reenter the drive. Please, no cell phone use while going around the circle.

## **Emergency Contact Information for Your Family**

Be sure to provide your emergency contact information when you fill out your registration on our online ORCAS registration system. It is extremely important that you notify the office of any change in telephone numbers, employment information, or persons picking up your child(ren).

## **Field Trips**

Students are taken on educational field trips throughout the school year. They are always accompanied by one or more teachers plus any parents who would like to participate. A signed copy of the school's *All-Program Permission, Risk & Release Form* must be on file prior to a student's participation in any school related off-campus trips. Be sure to sign and return permission slips by the designated day. Our insurance requires that parent drivers have a copy of their driver's license and insurance information on file in the office. Before driving on field trips or working in the classroom, parents are required to fill out a background check form.

Using a booster seat is the law in Washington. The law states that children are required to be transported in a booster seat until they are 4 feet 9 inches tall and weigh between 80 and 100 pounds. Many children may reach 8 to 12 years of age before they meet these height and weight requirements. The law also requires that children under 13 years old must be transported in rear seats.

## **Tuition Assistance**

To support the mission of The Meridian School and to make our quality education available to all, a designated amount of Tuition assistance is available. Application forms are available on our website at <http://www.meridianschool.edu/content/tuition-and-financial-aid>, and they must be sent to FAST (Tuition Assistance for Student Tuition) before our Tuition assistance deadline in February. Tuition assistance must be reapplied for every year, and a determination of need will be made based upon information supplied to the Tuition assistance committee by FAST and financial records and a personal request supplied by the applicant family. Returning families will be given priority.

## **Financial Information and Contracts**

The tuition for the following year is set by the board of trustees at its January meeting. Reenrollment contracts with tuition payment options for the following school year are mailed to returning families in February and should be returned to the school, with a deposit, by the deadline. After this time any spaces will be offered to new families.

## **Returned checks will be assessed an additional charge.**

If it becomes necessary for the school to commence collection procedures against the parent or guardian to enforce financial obligations arising from a student's enrollment, the parents or guardian will be liable to the school for all fees, costs, and expenses of any kind incurred with or without suit, including but not limited to attorneys' fees, all costs of court and public officials, and reasonable compensation for efforts conducted by the school's employees or agents.

Elementary and Extended Day tuition for the prior year must be paid in full before enrollment can be accepted for the Summer Program. Student records will be sent to other schools only if payment for elementary program, Extended Day and Summer Program is current.

If a student withdraws from The Meridian School for any reason, liability shall be in accordance with the schedule found on the enrollment contract, which states the liability as a percentage of the tuition balance. Charges will be assessed or refunds disbursed on this schedule once **WRITTEN NOTIFICATION** of withdrawal has been received by the business office. Voice mail is not acceptable but an email notice is. For students who withdraw while receiving tuition assistance, the liability will be calculated on the Tuition assistance agreement.

*Please note: In every case in which a child is withdrawn from school, the board of trustees has adopted a policy of collecting any charges that may be owed at the time of withdrawal, including the tuition in accordance with this schedule. The purpose of this provision is to compensate the school for unanticipated vacancies, which we generally cannot fill when withdrawal occurs after the enrollment period.*

### **Friday Morning Meeting**

Students and faculty will gather in the gym each Friday at 9 am for class presentations, announcements, student recognition, school sings and special performances. Individual students have the opportunity to perform at Meridian Talent and Variety show (MTV), scheduled twice a year. Parents are welcome to attend any Friday Morning Meeting.

### **Fundraising**

Meridian is fortunate to have a strong history of parents, faculty, trustees, grandparents, alumni, and friends who support our development program. This past year, 95 percent of our families participated in fundraising efforts. Our Annual Giving campaign kicks off in October, and the auction takes place in March. Your gifts and participation help make great things happen for our students and teachers!

### **Grandparents'/Special Friends' Day**

Every year Meridian invites our extended family and community of friends to experience our school firsthand. We strongly encourage your family to invite a "special" person—outside of your immediate family—so that our students will have the opportunity to host guests not familiar with daily life at Meridian. This day typically consists of a reception for our visitors, special performances, and a glimpse of daily life at Meridian School.

### **Homework**

Homework is an important part of the educational process. Students are expected to keep their assignments up-to-date and return homework promptly. All students are asked to read, or be read to for a developmentally appropriate amount of time each night as part of the homework process. Parents can assist by assuring their child has time and a place to complete homework assignments and by encouraging their child to ask for clarification and support at school from their teacher so that when challenges arise at home regarding confusion around the assignment or a lack of clarity, students have a way to begin to solve these challenges themselves.

### **Lost and Found**

Lost and Found is outside the main office. Please check regularly, as unclaimed items will be sent to charity at the end of each term.

## **Lunches**

Students at Meridian have the option of bringing a lunch from home or ordering from our lunch provider. Our lunch service offers meals five days a week. You can order meals online, and they will be delivered to the classroom at lunchtime.

## **Medical Appointments**

Please send written notice of doctor or dental appointments if they should occur during the school day or Extended Day hours. Parents must sign their child in or out with the main office when leaving or returning to school.

## **Medications and Illnesses**

In accordance with state requirements, a record of your child's immunizations and health status must be on file at The Meridian School. If a child becomes ill or injured at school, first aid will be administered and parents will be called. In an emergency, the child will be transported to Children's Hospital or to a designated physician.

If a child is not well enough to participate fully in the school program, including P.E. and recess, then s/he should not be sent to school. If a child needs to be excluded from recess time or P.E. class for any reason, the child will be expected to still attend both activities as an observer. Having a child sit out of recess or P.E. in the office is not an option at Meridian School.

Any child receiving prescription medication during the school day, either periodic or "permanent" (more than 15 days), must have on file an Authorization for Administration of Oral Medication at School signed by both a parent and physician or dentist. Over-the-counter medication needs only a parent signature. This form notes the time the medication is to be taken, the dosage, and any side effects. These procedures are required by law (RCW 28A.31.150 and 155). Forms are available from the school and Extended Day offices.

## **EpiPens, Inhalers & Medications**

Emergency Health Care Plan and Authorization to Administer Medication forms are required at the start of each new school year for any child having medical needs. These forms must be signed by a parent and the child's physician.

- EpiPens: Parents will need to provide two EpiPens for any child who is severely allergic to nuts, shellfish, bee stings, or other any other allergen that causes an anaphylactic reaction
- Inhalers: Parents will need to provide two inhalers for any child requiring an inhaler for asthma or any other respiratory medical concern
- Medications: Any medications to be given to a child during the school day should be brought to the Main Office

Please be sure all your emergency numbers are updated on ORCAS and on file in the main office.

## **Money and Valuables**

The school cannot assume the responsibility for money or other valuables. In an effort to promote positive social interactions and equitable and inclusive play, children are not permitted to bring toys, games or sports equipment to school.

## **Curriculum Night**

Curriculum Night is held during the second week of school. This event is a time for classroom teachers to discuss curriculum: the course of study, academic expectations, homework, field trips and special events. Parents gather in the gym for introductions and a welcome message from school administration and then visit their child's classroom, at which time teachers present an overview of the upcoming year. As this evening is geared toward parents and guardians, please do not bring children.

## **Publication Policy**

The Meridian School assumes the right to include any student's name or photo in both print and Web publications unless otherwise notified by a family during the ORCAS registration process.

*Our policy is to publish only the first name and last initial for any student mentioned in publications (Spyglass, grade-level news, Navigator, admission and marketing materials, website).*

## **Nuts and Allergies**

Students will not be allowed to share any special treats (for birthdays or other events) that contain any form of nuts (many food sources contain the actual nuts or may be prepared with peanut oil). No raw nuts may be brought to school. Students are permitted to have peanut butter sandwiches in their own personal lunches, but under no circumstance may they share with any other students. Even though other classmates may not have any nut allergies, this policy must be enforced. This aligns with our general policy that students are not allowed to share any lunch or snack items with their classmates or friends.

## **Party Invitations**

Should you wish to invite any of your child's classmates to birthday parties, slumber parties, or other such private affairs, please mail party invitations rather than hand-delivering them at school—unless all class members will be invited. This practice avoids hurt feelings and misunderstandings.

## **Progress Reports**

Students are monitored individually and assessed for performance. Progress reports are issued through ORCAS, our online progress report system. Parents receive these reports twice a year, which detail student performance. The fall progress report details goals established at the first parent-teacher conference and the child's performance to that point on those goals. At the end of the second trimester, another parent-teacher conference is scheduled to review progress in lieu of a progress report. The end-of-the-year progress report is issued within a week of the final day of school and speaks directly to your child's yearlong educational journey, suggestions for continued success, and areas where growth or continued practice may be needed.

## **School Insurance**

The school carries general liability and an umbrella school insurance policy. No individual insurance is offered.

## **Snacks**

Many of the grades feature a snack time during the school day. This is determined by the individual classroom teachers, who will inform you of their policies. When preparing snacks for the classroom, please keep our tolerant nut policy in mind.

## **Snow Days**

Meridian School will make its own determination of closure based on information from a variety of local sources.

Meridian has adopted the Alert Now system, which calls parents' home, cell, and work telephone numbers to notify them of any closure or late start. If snow should fall, you may also listen to your local television or radio stations (KING, KIRO, KOMO) for First Alerts! School Reports or call our voice mail (206-632-7154) for a current announcement. You may also check our website for information.

On days when snow starts during school hours, please call the Extended Day program for updated information regarding after-school care status. Full-time Extended Day families will receive a per diem credit for days closed because of weather.

This policy is being implemented for the safety of all concerned. We regret any inconvenience that snow closures may cause our parents, but we wish to continue to offer the best possible service to you while being aware of the safety issues involved with treacherous travel.

## **Visits and Conferences**

Parents are always welcome to visit the school. However, spending any length of time in the classroom unexpectedly may cause some disruption, so we request that parents make prior arrangements with the classroom teacher and/or administration. An appointment is appreciated when a conference with a teacher or administrator is desired. Please notify the Meridian staff member if you wish to schedule a specific conference time. Regular parent-teacher conferences are scheduled two times during the year. Sign-up times will be announced by your child's teacher and are managed through My Conference Time at [www.myconferencetime.com](http://www.myconferencetime.com).

## **Volunteers**

Parents are encouraged to participate in the school program. All parent volunteers and visitors must sign in at the main office before going to the classroom. A sign-in notebook is located at the front desk in the main office. Parents who will be driving children must have a signed *Parent Driver's Acknowledgement Form* and a copy of their driver's license and insurance on file in the office prior to transporting children on any away-from-school trip. All parents who intend to have contact with children must fill out a Washington State Patrol background check, available on ORCAS, our online registration system. Forms are also located in the main office. Parents will also be required to sign a *Classroom Volunteer and Field Trip Chaperone Agreement* form before they can volunteer in the classroom or chaperone a field trip.

There is a parent volunteer sign-in sheet outside of the kindergarten classrooms and first grade rooms for those volunteering in the South Annex.



# DISCIPLINE POLICY

To best serve the needs of all students enrolled at The Meridian School, it is essential to have a clear policy encompassing behavior expectations and disciplinary actions. There are four parts to this philosophy: Principles and Expectations, Disciplinary Policy, Procedure and Action, and Closure and Restoration. The policies set forth here are applicable to all students in grades K-5.

## Principles and Expectations (Meridian C.A.R.E.S.)

The Meridian School students are expected to treat everyone with respect, take responsibility for their actions, and try hard in all circumstances by applying the following traits:

C = Cooperation    A = Assertion    R = Responsibility    E = Empathy    S = Self Control

## RESPONSIBILITIES:

### Cooperation:

- I am responsible for working with others for the good of the entire group and not just myself.
- I am responsible for sometimes allowing others to get their way even when I feel strongly about something, knowing that the interest of the group is what's most important.

### Assertion:

- I am responsible for cleaning up after myself and positively contribute to my community at The Meridian School through both my words and my actions.
- I am responsible for not taking or destroying the property of others.
- Responsibility:
- I am responsible for making The Meridian School safe by not physically or emotionally hurting or threatening anyone.
- I am responsible for treating others with respect. This means that I will not make fun of, tease, or try to hurt the feelings of others.

### Empathy:

- I am responsible for allowing others to learn. This means I will not disturb or distract others when they are studying or working.
- I am responsible for working at my highest level at all times. This means that I will do my own work and be accountable for my own learning.

### Self-Control:

- I am responsible for controlling my thoughts and actions, even when I'm frustrated or feel angry with someone or something.
- I am responsible for listening to my peers and adults at Meridian School without interrupting or reacting negatively to what they say.

## **RIGHTS:**

### **To be TREATED WITH RESPECT:**

- I have the right to be safe at The Meridian School. This means that no one will physically or emotionally hurt me or threaten me.
- I have the right to be treated with respect at The Meridian School. This means that no one will ridicule or make fun of me.

### **To count on others to TAKE RESPONSIBILITY for themselves and their actions:**

- I have the right to depend on others to do their part in our community to make our building a clean and enjoyable place to learn.
- I have the right to expect my property to be safe at The Meridian School.

### **To depend on others to TRY HARD to make The Meridian School a positive place for learning and exploring:**

- I have the right to learn in school. This means that I will not be distracted or disturbed when studying or working.
- I have the right to depend on my teachers for help with assignments. This means that they will provide as much support as possible so that I can master the material being taught.

## **Disciplinary Policy, Procedure & Actions**

When students do not live up to these standards, educational and disciplinary action will be taken by teachers and/or administrators. School boundaries are defined by the campus, any field trip, service project or visit location as well as the electronic community and social networks of The Meridian School. On occasion, the school may choose to extend its boundaries in a circumstance where a student, the school or its community have been negatively affected by a student's behavior.

If a student commits an action that violates our behavioral expectations, the following disciplinary procedure will be followed.

### **Disciplinary Procedure**

If a student reports to a teacher or staff member the violation of another, the teacher or staff member will address the student as soon as possible about the infraction.

The involved teacher or staff member, in conference with other faculty, administration or Head of School, as appropriate, will determine the category of infraction and take action as outlined below. In order to understand the infraction, it is possible that the students involved in an incident will be questioned. At the conclusion of the discovery process, the involved students will be informed of the next steps in the disciplinary process.

### **Interview process**

Once students who are involved in a scenario are identified, notify the Assistant Head. One faculty member, or the Assistant Head, should be chosen to facilitate all of the conversations. These conversations will be done separately with each involved individual.

During the conversation, the faculty member will tell the student why they are being questioned and ask the student to tell their version of the story. Faculty will not make comments about other students' stories or insert personal opinion, but will continue to ask clarifying questions in order to gather as much information as possible.

Faculty conducting the conversation will take notes and write down any specific reports of actions or language by a student.

At the conclusion of the conversation, the faculty member will let the students know what the next steps will be, or clarify what still needs to be done before next steps are taken.

Faculty will consult with the Assistant Head and/or one other faculty member to identify next steps using the behavior flow chart. Notes from the interview will be typed and kept for future reference by the Assistant Head.

If the behavior is minor (yellow) or major (red), parents will be called directly within 24 hours. A slight infraction may or may not be communicated with an email.

Follow up with all students and faculty members will occur as needed.

These investigations may not always have a clear or decisive finish based on the interviews, witnesses, and those involved. Please remember that disciplinary action only occurs when there is a clear sense of the infraction and who is responsible.

## **DEFINITIONS & ACTIONS**

**Slight Behavioral Infraction:** Disruptive actions which are in violation of the child's responsibilities or other's rights (e.g. late for class, calling out repeatedly, failure to take care of personal belongings/materials, class and or learning disruptions).

Slight infractions will be handled between the teacher and student, and the student will be reminded of the C.A.R.E. expectations of The Meridian School and will be verbally warned not to commit the action again. These slight infractions will be documented and shared as needed and as determined by the involved teacher.

**Minor Behavioral Infraction:** Actions which violate another's rights or personal responsibilities such as shoving, repeated offense of a slight infraction, disrespect towards a peer or faculty member including inappropriate language or verbal abuse.

### **When a Minor Behavioral Infraction has occurred:**

All incidents at this level will be documented in detail. Students will receive a Yellow Sheet or Disciplinary Warning of which parents of all involved, teachers, program coordinators, and Head of School will be immediately informed. The Disciplinary Warning will require signatures from the student/s, involved faculty, and parent/s and will be kept on file for reference and documentation purposes. A student may be issued two or more Disciplinary Warnings for the same incident depending on the

findings of the discovery process and at the discretion of the Head of School.

Accumulation of three Disciplinary Warnings within a three month period will result in a mandatory Discipline Conference with the student, his/her parents, and his/her teacher at which time an *Individualized Behavioral Plan* will be completed. The plan will direct the student to improve his/her behavior in order to not commit additional infractions and may include but is not limited to community service, apology, behavior conferencing, and loss of or restricted privileges.

Students who adhere to the plan will not be subject to further disciplinary action. Failure to comply with an Individualized Behavioral Plan will be considered a Major Behavioral Infraction.

### **Major Behavioral Infraction:**

Serious actions which violate another's rights or personal responsibilities including but not limited to the following:

- Violence (aggressive negative physical interactions) or threat of violence to any member of the community (this includes bringing a weapon to school).
- Inappropriate language, sexual innuendo and verbal abuse.
- Failure to comply with Individualized Behavior Plan resulting from either a Minor or Major Behavioral Infraction.
- Harassment/bullying of any kind.\*\*

### **When a Major Behavioral Infraction has occurred:**

- All incidents at this level will be documented in detail.
- All Major Behavioral Infractions immediately result in a Head's Meeting involving his/her parents, and the Head of School. The Head of School will take disciplinary action which may include an extended Behavioral Plan, probation, suspension, or, possibly, expulsion.

### **Closure and Restoration**

The Meridian School uses a restorative justice process to put all involved students back on the right track after a behavioral infraction as part of our commitment to the Responsive Classroom philosophy. Some situations involve a power imbalance and the restorative process may need to be modified or not used at all. Restorative conferencing will bring together The Meridian School community members, including but not limited to fellow students, teachers, administration and parents who have been affected by the harm done to bring the situation to a close. Conferencing may also be used for a single event that affected multiple students. The Meridian School faculty will continue to monitor all students involved in an infraction to ensure all students' safety. A failure to comply with the restorative justice process will trigger further disciplinary action.

# PART I: ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

## Part I: Introduction

The purpose of the following policy is to inform our school community, to prevent bullying, and to offer procedures to address incidents in a fair and just manner. We believe that children need to be educated about bullying and learn tools to stand up for themselves and others. Teaching about bullying is part of our character education and diversity programs at Meridian. These programs offer the foundation for good citizenship and promote positive, respectful interactions with all members of our school community.

## What is Bullying?

The Meridian School is committed to a safe and respectful educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers and other community members free from harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic in RCW (Revised Code of Washington) 9A.36.080(3) (race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or mental or physical disability), or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education.
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment.
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Definitions of bullying, in particular, point to a combination of behaviors, rather than a single act. That is, while it may be developmentally appropriate for children to have low impulse control and occasionally act out in a physical or verbally hurtful way, most psychologists consider a combination of behaviors before using the evocative term "bully." This implies that all members of our community, including parents, must not be too quick to jump to conclusions. Thus, we all need to be careful how we use the word "bullying." To be clear, for this community:

Bullying encompasses some or all of the following behaviors: a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + (typically) repetition + an unjust use of power + evident enjoyment by the aggressor and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim.

Furthermore, many psychologists regard bullying as a disrespectful relationship problem:

- People who bully are learning to use power and aggression to control and distress others.
- People who are victimized become increasingly powerless and find themselves trapped in relationships in which they are being abused.

Bullying can also be a behavior concern displayed by adults. For that reason, it is very important to understand that teachers, administrators, support staff, and parents all have an obligation to (a) not bully

others, (b) not stand by while others are bullied, and/or (c) always report and deal with bullying whenever one sees it.

### **Forms of Bullying**

Physical bullying includes behaviors such as hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, beating up, stealing, or damaging property.

Verbal bullying includes behaviors such as name-calling, mocking, teasing, humiliating, and threatening someone, racist comments, or sexual harassment.

Social and psychological bullying includes behaviors such as making rude gestures, excluding others from the group, gossiping or spreading rumors, setting others up to look foolish, and damaging friendships. It may also include ostracizing or ignoring peers, name calling, and teasing hurtfully.

Electronic or cyberbullying includes the use of email, cell phones, text messages, and Internet sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, or damage reputations and friendships.

Racial bullying includes behaviors such as treating people badly because of their racial or ethnic background, making negative comments about a person's cultural background, calling someone racist names, or telling racist jokes.

Religious bullying includes treating people badly because of their religious background or beliefs, saying bad things about a religious background or belief, calling someone names or telling jokes based on his or her religious beliefs.

Sexual bullying includes behaviors such as excluding or treating someone badly because s/he is a boy or a girl; making someone feel uncomfortable because of their gender; making sexist comments or jokes; touching, pinching or grabbing someone in a sexual way; spreading a sexual rumor about someone; or calling someone names based on sexual orientation.

Disability bullying includes behaviors such as excluding someone or treating them badly because of a disability, making someone feel uncomfortable because of a disability, or making comments or jokes to hurt someone with a disability.

## **PART II: MERIDIAN SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

The Meridian School is committed to maintaining a respectful school environment that is both safe and healthy. To that end, bullying in any form will not be tolerated.

All members of the Meridian community have the right to feel safe from bullying at school. Such safety is achieved by mutual respect, self-discipline, and self-responsibility. Acquiescence of the victim and/or others involved is no justification for bullying: i.e., the implied or expressed consent of a person or persons to bullying shall not be a defense against discipline under this policy. This policy applies to students on school grounds, off-campus at a school-sponsored activity, and while traveling to and from

school. It also applies to on- or off-campus electronic or cyberbullying when the effect of such incidents negatively affects Meridian students as a result of their mutual relationship with The Meridian School. All staff, students, and their parents will receive this policy at the beginning of the school year as part of the parent/student and employee handbooks.

## **Protocol**

- Any student who believes he or she is the victim of bullying or observes incidents that might constitute bullying is strongly encouraged to inform or report the situation to a teacher or other staff member.
- If a child reports to their parent(s) about an incident, that parent needs to communicate the situation directly to either the classroom teacher, Assistant Head or Head of School promptly.
- The teacher or staff member who has been approached will notify the Head of School or Assistant Head of School. Either the Head or Assistant Head will promptly do an investigation of the incident(s). Reports will be treated confidentially and only reported to others within the school community on a need-to-know-basis. However, in almost every circumstance the offending party, if there is one, will have to be informed to allow for the proper gathering of all relevant facts.
- Parents or legal guardians of both the alleged bully(s) and victim(s) will be notified of the incident right away, as well as next steps to resolve the situation and possible consequences. In most instances, a meeting will be arranged with the student(s), parent(s), and the Head of School and/or Assistant Head to discuss the situation further.
- Students who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- The Head or Assistant Head may encourage parents of both the bully and the victim to consider private counseling to help address the pattern of unacceptable behavior of the bully and potentially long-term detrimental effects to the victim(s).

## **PART III: EDUCATING STUDENTS, STAFF & FAMILIES ABOUT BULLYING**

Teachers will be required to discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying.

The school educates the students, staff, and parents about bullying and strives to build healthy relationships and community in and across the classrooms. Such education includes the following:

### **Proactive Education for Students**

- Conversations which focus on safe and respectful behavior during Responsive Classroom morning meetings
- Team-building activities planned in every classroom
- Conversations to increase awareness and knowledge of bullying, standing up for oneself and others, what it means and why it is important to be an ally
- Grade-level outdoor education and community-building experiences such as Camp Orkila, Camp Sealth and the Olympic Park Institute

- A buddy program to promote the vertical mixing of students across grade levels
- Implementing and communicating a diversity initiative to increase tolerance and understanding community-wide
- Teachers designing and implementing lessons and units that integrate social skills, empathy building, and tolerance with academic skills. This includes intentional curriculum on diversity to increase awareness and knowledge of prejudice/tolerance and social injustice/justice and acting responsibly by being able to take action when confronted with social injustice
- Friday Morning Meeting assemblies that include monthly presentations of school-wide character traits of focus, school-wide behavior expectations, and ways to deal with bullying

## Staff Training and Support

- Professional development for the staff in Responsive Classroom, around topics of diversity and other programs that promote a safe and respectful school environment
- Establishment in August 2010 of a faculty School Climate Committee to identify faculty and parent resources, assemblies, and programs that address bullying and other matters that affect school climate. Such educational resources and assemblies will be communicated through our website, library, all-school emails, classroom newsletters, classroom orientations, Spyglass, Friday Morning Meetings, and parent forums.

## Parent Education

- Establishing and growing a parent resource library
- Parent speakers on topics pertaining to bullying
- Providing this Anti-Bullying Policy, which includes definitions of terms and support systems within the school
- Opportunities for parent forums and discussions on fostering a safe and respectful school environment

\*\*Footnote:

*"A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself." Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions, a pattern of behavior repeated over time, and an imbalance of power or strength. There are three classifications of Bullying:*

*Physical: Harm to another's person or property.*

*Emotional: Harm to another's self-concept.*

*Relational: Harm to another through damage (or threat of damage) to relationships or to feelings of acceptance, friendship, or group inclusion.*

\*\* The Meridian School uses the definition of bullying from McGrath Bullying Prevention and Intervention System and Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.



# GUIDELINES FOR GOOD SHEPHERD CENTER FRONT LAWN

## Background Information

Over the years, there have been concerns voiced by parents and staff related to children's safety, inadequate parental supervision, and damage to the front lawn, hedges, and flower beds after students cross the driveway and play on the front lawn.

## Action Plan

Once students are dismissed to the care of their parents/guardians (by crossing the driveway over to the walkway), it is the responsibility of the awaiting adults to diligently supervise and care for their children. Parents are welcome to share supervisory duties and designate certain individuals to keep watch at certain times. The school administration is not and should not be responsible for such supervision.

Students need to remain within their parent/guardian/appointed supervisor's sight and avoid going behind any bushes that might obscure the watchful eye of the adults present.

The same expectations for safe and responsible play in effect during recess and at other times of the school day will remain in effect on the front lawn after school.

Students are expected to play safely at all times, respect the personal space of others as well as the grounds being used, and remain within assigned boundaries (on the grass and not behind the bushes).

Students will remain within sight of their parents/guardians at all times.

Meridian Park and Good Shepherd Center grounds must be left in their natural state.

Any parent or adult is encouraged to correct and redirect students who exhibit inappropriate behavior in their vicinity. It takes a village!

## Students will refrain from:

- Climbing on sidewalk walls.
- Tackling, piling upon each other, pushing, or slide tackling.
- Using balls or any other airborne objects, since chasing after them poses a threat to students' safety and potentially damages the flower beds.
- Placing backpacks, binders, and other objects on the hedges lining the walkway.
- Jumping over or through the hedges and planting beds.

**If a student is unable to follow these guidelines, an adult must have the student wait at their side until it is time to leave campus.**

If these guidelines are not adhered to, the privilege of playing on the front lawn will regrettably be revoked. Let's all work together to ensure the safety of our students and stewardship of our grounds.

## **Head Lice Policy**

It is the responsibility of the parent to do periodic head lice checks of their own child(ren) and to bring their child(ren) to school nit and head lice free. If it is reported to the school that a child has lice, the classroom teacher will notify the other parents in the class so that they are aware a case of head lice has been reported. If a teacher notices head lice during the school day, the child's parents and other parents in the class will be notified.

## **ACCEPTABLE TECHNOLOGY USE POLICY\***

\*This document is included in the back-to-school mailing and should be signed and returned by every student.

Members of the Meridian community are expected to act in ways that show consideration and respect for other people and, by that behavior, enhance an open atmosphere of trust and honesty that is consistent with our Meridian core values.

The following are the guidelines for your use of technology at the Meridian School, including in the computer lab, in the classroom, in offices, and within the school's network. These guidelines apply to the devices being used, the work being created, and the use of the internet for school related activities. Please note that these guidelines also include all personal networking devices (including cell phones) that may be owned by you or someone other than Meridian School but are using the Meridian School Computer Network.

### **Our Technology Guidelines:**

- Use of Meridian technology resources will be academic in nature and related to assignments and projects.
- Students will use their school issued account to access the network and their folder. Access to other's accounts and folders will be by permission only.
- Students will use technology to communicate with others about school work. Communication will be done respectfully and meaningfully, following the "Meridian C.A.R.E.S." principles.
- Students will always give proper citation for work found on the internet, and never present other people's work as their own.
- Students will only alter settings on their devices with permission and reason.

### **Computer Games and Social Media at the Meridian School**

Students will not play games or participate in social media on school computers and devices during school or after-school, unless they have specific, direct supervision of a Meridian staff member as part of a class or sanctioned program activity.

### **Administrative Information Pertaining to Enforcement of These Provisions**

The Meridian IT Systems Manager and the Head of School, along with the administrative staff reserve the right as required by law and/or by school policy, to obtain, search, and investigate abuses of the Meridian IT Systems.

Student violations of the Computer User Agreement will be handled in accordance with our Handbook and our Board policy. Consequences of failing to follow these guidelines may result in, but are not limited to, restriction or removal of technology privileges and replacement of damaged equipment.



## Dismissal Release Form 2014-2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Name (please print)

3 4 5  
Grade (circle one)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Name (please print)

3 4 5  
Grade (circle one)

I give my permission for my child(ren) to leave The Meridian School without an adult in attendance for the following reasons:

- to walk, bike or skateboard home at dismissal time (3:15pm)
- to walk, bike or skateboard to a bus stop at dismissal time (3:15pm)

By signing this form, I understand that dismissal plans should be discussed at home, prior to the beginning of the school day. Meridian School staff members WILL NOT call home to confirm whether or not a student has permission to leave on a given day if this form is signed and on file with the Main Office.

A signature by a parent or guardian relieves The Meridian School or any responsibility or liability for the student once they leave campus at dismissal time (3:15pm).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# PARENT COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

All relevant and timely information from the school will come through these methods of communication.

## The Meridian School Website

On our general website, you will find a wealth of information including a school calendar, school news, lunch order link, class pages, admission procedures and tour schedules, fundraising updates, alumni news, and Extended Day information. We will post any emergency closure information on the website. You can also find directions to the school and read biographies of faculty and staff. All this and more is at [www.meridianschool.edu](http://www.meridianschool.edu).

## Parent Essentials

Our website is your portal to a variety of school forms, your weekly Spyglass, school calendar, lunch service information and more! No login or password will be necessary. You can find Parent Essentials on the homepage on our website under “Resources.”

## Spyglass & Spyglass Mini

We communicate with Meridian families through our bi-monthly Spyglass Mini and Spyglass. These newsletters are sent via all-school email and the Spyglass is archived on the Resources page of our website.

- Our Spyglass Mini is sent out bi-monthly on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month and includes important dates and reminders pertaining to the coming week
- Our Spyglass is sent out bi-monthly on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month and includes detailed information about upcoming or recent events. The Spyglass will include Grade-Level newsletters and may also include submissions from the Board of Trustees, Parent Association and Advancement Team

## Grade-Level News

Your child’s classroom teacher will publish a newsletter in the full Spyglass that describes happenings in the classroom. Future field trips, class events, and curriculum projects and updates are all examples of things you may read about in a grade-level newsletter. Specialists will also publish newsletters on a rotating schedule throughout the year. You will find a link to these biweekly newsletters in the Spyglass.

## All-School Email List

This list is used to distribute information pertinent to our entire school community. It is also the method by which we remind families to access their weekly Spyglass. This method of distribution is for high-priority messages only and is unavailable for parent-generated messages.

## Class Email Lists

These email lists are primarily for communication from the teacher to each individual class. Classroom updates and reminders regarding field trips, school events etc., are the primary things you will receive from your class email list.

## **Thursday Packet**

Your child will bring home this packet every Thursday. It can contain homework and class information, as well as any forms you need to sign and return to school (field trip, book orders, etc.).

## **Meridian Navigator**

This newsletter for current Meridian families and our extended community is published two times per year. It includes items regarding school initiatives and activities, important school-wide events, announcements of calendar changes, and insights from our board chair or Head of School.

## **IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**

We use the Alert Now automated phone system (you will receive a phone call) in lieu of a phone tree to notify parents of school closures or emergencies. Reminder: It is very important you notify the main office of any changes in your home, cell, or work telephone numbers. In addition, we post on [SchoolReport.org](http://SchoolReport.org). The latter broadcasts our school closure information on local TV and radio stations. We also post all emergency information on the home page of the website.

## **Communication from Families to the School**

Communication is an important component of the success of The Meridian School. We encourage and facilitate open communication among and between our students, teachers, staff, and parents.

By means of email, voice mail, written, or in-person communication, parents are encouraged to ask questions, address concerns, bring forward ideas, or extend compliments to teachers and administrative staff.

All Meridian staff and teachers are accessible by both email and voice mail and you should receive a response to any question, comment or inquiry within 24 hours.

Your child's classroom teacher is the primary resource for parent communication. Additional resources, as appropriate, are the Head of School and the board of trustees.

## **Classroom Teacher**

Most issues, concerns, or questions about your child, the curriculum, academic progress, social interaction, skills assessment, homework, or other related topics are best and most appropriately answered by your child's classroom teacher.

Many parents find it helpful to have periodic discussions or interactions with teachers in addition to scheduled conferences. Meridian teachers value getting to know both students and their parents and encourage parent communication on a regular basis.

Also, Meridian teachers are well informed about school policies and procedures. They are trained and skilled in knowing when and how to refer parents to other resources within the school community (i.e., specialists, administrative staff, Assistant Head, or Head of School) for specific issues or questions.

## **Head of School**

The Head of School is available, accessible, and eager to answer questions, address issues, or receive ideas

related to the school as a whole. The Head of School can be involved if parents wish to further pursue a classroom issue. Email, voice mail, written communication, or scheduled appointments are convenient, easy, and welcome ways for parents to communicate with the Head of School.

### **Board of Trustees**

In the rare instance when parents think their concerns have not been appropriately addressed by the Head of School, parents can express their concerns in writing to The Meridian School Board of Trustees.

## **REGISTRATION TIMELINE**

### **May**

- Returning families must have completed registration to access their child's progress reports when they are released for viewing in June.
- New families will receive online ORCAS registration forms in via email in May. Your review and approval of family information should be completed no later than June 30.

### **August**

In August an electronic packet is emailed to new and returning families. This packet will include but is not limited to:

- Welcome letter from the Head of School
- A letter from the Director of Development
- Grade-level supply lists
- School calendar for the upcoming school year
- Important Forms and Agreements (these need to be signed and returned)
- And more!

### **September**

- Every student is required to have a Consent for Emergency Care and Treatment Form on file before the first day of school.
- Each family's work and emergency telephone numbers must be updated on ORCAS before the first day of school.
- Every child must have a signed and up-to-date immunization form on file in the office by the first day of school. The Washington Department of Health requires every student to be current with their vaccines at the beginning of each school year.
- Every parent must sign and submit an *All-Program Permission, Risk & Release Form* before their child is permitted to attend a field trip or participate in any Meridian after-school activities (enrichment, athletics etc.)

The Meridian School will keep up-to-date records of all parents' Washington State Patrol background check forms (valid for two years). This check is required when parents volunteer in the classroom or drive on field trips. All parents must sign and submit a *Parent Volunteer and Field Trip Chaperone Agreement* before volunteering in the classroom or chaperoning field trips. Any parent who plans to drive on any field trip during the school year will be required to have a completed background check form, signed driver's acknowledgement form, signed Parent Volunteer and Field Trip Chaperone Agreement, and a copy of his or her driver's license and automobile insurance on file in the administrative office. New forms are required each school year.

## EXTENDED DAY

The Meridian School offers an enriched before- and after-school program for Meridian students requiring child care. Our program is licensed under Department of Early Learning (DEL), which means we have met and implemented state child-care licensing requirements to ensure a quality program and child safety. It is our mission to provide a well-supervised program: one that is safe, physically and emotionally, where children can flourish, be challenged, and have fun.

The program operates from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the academic year. The program provides enthusiastic, well-trained staff and a variety of active and quiet activity options in an environment more social and less structured than the school day. A snack is provided in the morning and afternoon. In addition, enrichment classes are offered throughout the school year at an additional cost. Extended Day is also available at additional cost during winter and spring vacations on a full-time basis. Availability is given to students enrolled as full-time Extended Day status, and then any available spots are open to intermittent students.

### Extended Day Enrollment Options

#### Full-Time Care

Students enrolled as full-time Extended Day participants are eligible for care every morning and afternoon, all vacations, and during in-service and parent/teacher conferences. There is an extra charge for winter and spring breaks, which must be paid in advance with no refunds.

#### Intermittent Care

An intermittent rate is available for any child not enrolled monthly (full-time) in the Extended Day program. Students arriving any time before 8:30 a.m. or picked up any time after 3:30 p.m. will be charged a per diem rate as outlined in the Extended Day contract. All intermittent participants who attend any of the enrichment classes will be charged an intermittent Extended Day fee based on the duration of time in Extended Day, plus the class fee. There is no charge for changing from full-time Extended Day to the intermittent plan (or for changing to no Extended Day), but if you wish to change back to full-time Extended Day from the intermittent plan, there is a \$50 processing fee. Changes from full-time to intermittent will not be accepted after May 1. Changes in Extended Day enrollment status must be communicated to the Extended Day Director before billing status is changed. Intermittent users may enroll in winter and spring breaks if space is available. There is an extra charge for winter and spring breaks, which must be paid in advance—no refunds.

**Extended Day will be open to all Meridian families, regardless of Extended Day enrollment status, on all in-service days and parent-teacher conference days.** Information regarding sign-up for fall dates will be distributed in early September and sign-ups for later dates will begin in December,

Extended Day hours are 7:00–8:30 a.m. and 3:00–6:00 p.m. Meridian’s liability coverage for extended care corresponds with these hours.

# SUMMER QUEST

Summer Quest is open to the public for children entering kindergarten through those entering sixth grade (5–12 years old). Our day camp program is licensed under the Department of Early Learning (DEL), which means we have met and implemented licensing requirements to ensure a quality program and child safety.

Program Format: The children are assigned to an age- and grade-appropriate group for the program day.

- Group 1: 5 and 6 years old
- Group 2: 5 and 6 years old
- Group 3: 6 and 7 years old
- Group 4: 8 to 12 years old

Each group size is twenty participants. Each group will develop its own identity and will engage in activities that are appropriate and enjoyable for the group members' age and developmental level. A snack is provided each morning and afternoon. Children bring their own lunches. The children are involved in art and crafts projects, sports, games, drama, community projects and events, multicultural events, and more, focusing on a specific weekly theme. All groups will have three field trip days and two "in" days each week of Summer Quest.

Daily Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The core group activity portion of the day is 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Enrollment: Registration is online and is made available to Meridian families before we open it up for the general public.

All Summer Program fees are payable in advance. No refunds after the June deadline date. Enrollment in The Meridian School Summer Program is made without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion, creed, disability, political belief, or any other legally protected status.

## **Late Pick-up Policy for Extended Day and Summer Program**

Children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. Parents who pick up their child(ren) after 6:00 p.m. will be assessed a late fee of \$1 per minute per child. This allows us to compensate staff who are inconvenienced by having to stay late and to pay overhead and liability costs. The director reserves the right to remove children from the program who are habitually picked up after 6:00 p.m.

*\*Another program option is the Summer Quest Enrichment classes. Typically there are 20-30 classes offered each summer. Enrichment Classes are independent of the Summer Quest day camp program. Class fees vary.*