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# MEREDITH HILL MESSENGER

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Cindy Kelsey, Principal  
Mary Jane Henry, Office Manager

Jane Arthur, Secretary  
Lynette Edwards, Office Clerk

## Student-Led Conferences Scheduled October 27-28

Elementary students across the district are preparing for two special days at the end of this month when they will tell parents about their performance in reading and math, and share goals they plan to achieve this year. These Student-Led Conferences will take place on October 27-28, and no regular classes are scheduled on these days.

### What is the student's role?

We believe that allowing students to talk to parents about their learning will give them a stronger sense of ownership and pride, and a greater understanding of how they can continue and improve their achievement. The student's job at conference time will be to explain some of the standards and goals they are working on, and to show examples of their current level of performance. With the support of teacher and parents, they will also set goals for future improvement.

### What is the parent's role?

One of the most important things a parent can do is attend the conference! This gives a strong message about the importance parents place on their child's learning. During the conference, parents are encouraged to listen, to compliment and talk with their child about his/her work, and to identify ways they can help their child reach his/her goals.

### What is the teacher's role?

Teachers have spent the first month of school getting to know the strengths and needs of each child. They have helped their students

understand the standards and goals they are working on. By conference time, teachers will help children select work samples which show their level of performance in these areas. They will assist students in setting goals for the remainder of the year. Prior to the conferences, teachers will also provide opportunities for students to practice their part in the conference in order to put them more at ease.

### What is the timeline and schedule?

Conference schedules will come home the week of October 17th. We will do our best to schedule conferences back-to-back for families with more than one student.

In order to give students full attention during the conference, we request that brothers and sisters do not attend. School-age children are invited to participate in activities that the school will have available in the lunchroom while you are in their sibling's conference.

We look forward to this time when students can show off their learning, and identify goals which they and their teachers have set for the remaining months of the year. Mark your calendars and plan to join us for some very special conversations with your children on October 27 and 28!

Sincerely,

Cindy Kelsey, Principal



## Oct 31st at Meredith Hill

For the first time in many years, Halloween is falling on a day when school is in session. We know that October 31st is a highly anticipated day for many children as they plan for their evening adventures. The Meredith Hill staff acknowledges children's excitement as well as the need to have a meaningful day of learning on October 31st.

We want to inform you well ahead of time how Meredith Hill will be handling this day. The dress code will be the same as every other day at our school—in other words, no costumes, masks, hair color, or makeup. Each teacher will decide whether or not their classroom will be involved in a low-key celebration at the end of the school day Monday. The teacher will also determine, if they choose to have a celebration, what that celebration will involve and what the focus will be. If you have any questions, you can talk to your child's classroom teacher or Mrs. Kelsey.

## New Staff Member

Meradene Moehrle is our new para-educator in Preschool. Meradene has worked in the district many years, and comes to us from Sherwood Forest. Welcome, Meradene!

## From the Counselor

A few young people in our area and throughout the nation are playing "The Choking Game," an activity young people have been doing for at least the last 80 years. Most recently, the practice has spread among pre-teens and young teens. And children have begun trying it alone, choking themselves with belts, ropes or pet collars and leashes—

several children in our area nearly died or have died. Doctors looking at the phenomenon say the young people most likely to try it are between 9 and 14 years old. At Meredith Hill, there are no current plans to use a curriculum to address this phenomenon. However, we do want to point you to some information so that you can be aware and informed. Below are some links, including information on Federal Way Public School web site and media web sites:

- 1) <http://www.fwps.org/info/press/0506/060930choking.html>
- 2) [www.komotv.com/stories/39509.htm](http://www.komotv.com/stories/39509.htm)
- 3) [www.king5.com/localnews/stories/NW\\_092905WABchokinggameSW\\_.a64a4222.html](http://www.king5.com/localnews/stories/NW_092905WABchokinggameSW_.a64a4222.html)

### *How to Warn Your Children*

If you decide to discuss this with your child, here are some ideas for the conversation:

- 1) Tell your child about the lethality of the "Choking Game."
- 2) Impress upon them that putting a rope around their neck is never acceptable. Doing something that causes them to lose consciousness is never acceptable.
- 3) Realize that one conversation, talking and listening, might not be enough.
- 4) Educate yourself about the variations and the symptoms of this activity and others that involve oxygen deprivation.

### *The Warning Signs*

Here's what to look for as warning signs for kids that might be playing "the choking game": a sudden change of personality, anger outbursts, bloodshot eyes, severe headaches, marks or bruises on your child's neck and, closed doors. And most importantly, experts say parents should talk to their children about risky behavior.

If you have questions or concerns, please call Mrs. EagleCruz at (253) 945-3208.

## King County Library Study Zone

The Study Zone, a free service of the King County Library System, is an after-school homework help program that utilizes the skills of volunteer tutors and emphasizes study skills and active learning. Elementary through high school students may “drop in” for homework help any time during Study Zone hours.

The Study Zone program is designed to be a group setting and the volunteers will not be able to provide intensive one-on-one tutoring.

Additional program information is available on the King County Library System website at [www.kcls.org/studyzone](http://www.kcls.org/studyzone). If you have any questions about the program, please call the KCLS Service Center (425) 369-3312 or email [aholloma@kcls.org](mailto:aholloma@kcls.org).

## Wanted: School Bus Drivers

The Federal Way School District is looking for new people to join their team. If you are interested in becoming a substitute bus driver, you can go to the ESC Building, located at 31405 18th Ave. S., in Federal Way, to pick up an application. You will need to go to the Department of Motor Vehicles and get a copy of your complete abstract, to be attached to your application.

This is a great part-time job; you can be on the same schedule as your school children, having summers and holidays off.

If you have any questions, please call the training office at (253) 945-5952 or (253) 945-5943.

## See You at Our Book Fair!

Would you encourage your child’s love of reading if you could? Of course. What’s more—you can!

Scholastic Book Fairs comes to our school on October 25<sup>th</sup>, to share exciting books and educational learning products with our young readers. Parents and teachers will find plenty of items to interest them too. The Fair is open each day from 9:00 – 3:00.

We’re extending our hours during conferences on October 27<sup>th</sup>. The fair will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

When you visit the Fair, look for the Classroom Wish List display to see how you can help build your child’s classroom library.

The Book Fair helps us promote learning while raising money for our library. Our goal for this year’s fair is to provide additional titles to our Reading Counts program.

Please note that there is an 8.8% tax on all purchases.

Don’t miss out on the Scholastic Book Fair, October 25<sup>th</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup>. Call (253) 945-3220 for more information.

## Safety on the Stairs

The Safety Patrol would like to remind students who live within walking distance of our northern playfield, to use the stairs in back of school when going home. For safety reasons, students and parents are not allowed to walk up the hillside instead of using the stairs. The correct exit procedure is to walk down the lower stairs to the playground area, proceed behind the ball field, and then turn up the big stairs. Thank you for your cooperation.

## One for Books

Meredith Hill Library has teamed up with Scholastic Book Fairs to help the victims affected by the Katrina Hurricane, in a program called One for Books. For each dollar donated to the Meredith Hill Library, Scholastic will donate a book to be distributed to children, schools, and organizations that have been affected by Hurricane Katrina. Those dollars will build our library while providing books to Katrina's victims. Just enclose your donation in an envelope labeled One-for-Books. Our first day we collected \$56.00 for our library, which is 56 books for Katrina victims. Our goal is to earn enough books for an entire elementary. Thank you for supporting literacy at Meredith Hill Elementary and helping the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

## Mark Your Calendar

### OCTOBER

- 13 – NO School - Data Day
- 14 – NO School –State Inservice
- 18 – PTA Board Meeting 6:30
- 20 – Cookie Day
- 21 – Preschool to Pumpkin Patch  
10:00-1:00
- 25 – Book Fair begins
- 26 – End of First Quarter
- 27-28– Student-Led Conferences

### NOVEMBER

- 1 – Book Fair ends
- 3 – Cookie Day
- 11 – NO School – Veteran's Day
- 15 – PTA General Meeting 6:30
- 17 – Cookie Day  
National Book Week  
Assemblies 1:20 K/1/2  
2:20 3/4/5
- 18 – PTA Family Bingo 5:00-8:00
- 24-25– Thanksgiving Holiday-No School

## Kelso's Choices: Conflict Management at Meredith Hill

Kelso's Choices is a problem solving and conflict management curriculum taught in our first through third grade classes by Mrs. EagleCruz, our school counselor. Students are taught that they are old enough, smart enough and capable of solving small problems. Small problems can be important, but are annoying, frustrating, bothersome, and can "bug" the student. They are taught to use two of Kelso's choices to solve their small problems.

These Kelso's choices are:

1. Go to another game.
2. Share and take turns.
3. Talk it out.
4. Walk away.
5. Ignore it.
6. Tell them to stop.
7. Apologize
8. Make a deal.
9. Wait and cool off.

Students get a chance to learn and practice these skills. They are to use Kelso's choices at recess, in line, on the bus, and in the classroom. Students may go to an adult also if they have really tried two of Kelso's choices and these did not work.

They are taught to go to a trusted adult for "big problems." These are problems that are scary, dangerous, where someone is hurt or may get hurt. The feelings involved in these problems are terror, panic, and fear. We list adults at home and at school the students can tell about big problems.

If you have any questions about Kelso's choices, please call Mrs. Patty EagleCruz at (253) 945-3208.

