

Meridian Elementary School District

Parent – Student Handbook



Small School. Big Outcomes.
Growing Leaders. Inspiring Excellence. Changing
Lives.

Welcome to Meridian Elementary School

A Message from the Superintendent/Principal

Dear Meridian Families,

It is with great excitement, gratitude, and optimism that I welcome you to another incredible year at Meridian Elementary School. Whether you are returning to Meridian or joining our school family for the very first time, we are honored that you have entrusted us with one of life's greatest responsibilities—the education, safety, and well-being of your child.

At Meridian Elementary, we believe every child has unique gifts, talents, and limitless potential waiting to be discovered. Our responsibility extends far beyond teaching reading, writing, mathematics, science, and history. We are committed to developing the whole child by nurturing their **mind, heart, body, and spirit**, helping every student grow into a confident learner, compassionate citizen, and future leader.

This school year marks an exciting new chapter for Meridian. We have welcomed several exceptional educators and staff members who share a common passion for helping children succeed. Together, they bring enthusiasm, experience, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to providing every student with a safe, engaging, and academically challenging learning environment.

As a small school, we have the unique opportunity to know each student personally. Our size allows us to build meaningful relationships with our students and families while maintaining high expectations and providing individualized support. We truly believe that **small schools can achieve extraordinary results**, and every decision we make is centered on helping our students thrive.

One of our most exciting initiatives this year is the implementation of **Leader in Me**, a nationally recognized leadership framework based on Stephen Covey's principles. Through Leader in Me, students will learn essential life skills including responsibility, goal setting, communication, teamwork, perseverance, integrity, and service. These habits will help prepare our students not only for success in school but for success throughout their lives.

Our dedicated staff believes that education is most successful when schools and families work together as true partners. We value open communication, mutual respect, and meaningful collaboration with every family. We encourage you to stay actively involved in your child's education by attending school events, participating in parent conferences, volunteering when possible, and maintaining regular communication with your child's teacher. Your involvement makes an incredible difference.

Throughout this handbook, you will find important information regarding our school procedures, academic expectations, attendance policies, student services, safety practices, and opportunities for family involvement. While policies are important, they simply provide the structure that allows us to focus on what matters most—helping children learn, grow, and become the very best versions of themselves.

Our commitment to every family is simple:

- We will provide a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- We will hold high academic and behavioral expectations for every student.
- We will celebrate each child's unique strengths and accomplishments.
- We will communicate openly and honestly with families.

- We will treat every student with dignity, kindness, and respect.
- We will never stop believing in the limitless potential of every child.

As we begin this new school year together, I encourage every student to embrace new opportunities, work hard, show kindness, and strive for excellence each day. To our parents and guardians, thank you for your continued partnership and trust. Together, we can accomplish incredible things for the children of Meridian Elementary School.

On behalf of our entire staff, welcome to another amazing year. We look forward to creating lasting memories, celebrating achievements, overcoming challenges together, and helping every child discover just how capable they truly are.

Thank you for allowing us the privilege of serving your family.

With appreciation,

Chris Meyer
Superintendent/Principal
Meridian Elementary School District

Our Promise

Every Child. Every Day. Every Opportunity.

At Meridian Elementary School, we are committed to inspiring excellence, fostering leadership, building character, and empowering every student to realize their greatest potential.

This Document is living and will change as we find necessary. We will always let you know about any new policies or changes.

CHAPTER 1

The Meridian Difference

Small School. Big Outcomes.

"Educating Minds • Inspiring Excellence • Expanding Horizons"

Why Meridian?

Meridian Elementary School is more than a school—it is a family united by a common purpose: helping every child discover their strengths, achieve academic excellence, develop strong character, and become confident leaders prepared for the future.

While many schools are defined by their size, we believe our greatest strength comes **because** of our size. Being a small school allows us to know every student personally, celebrate every success, recognize when additional support is needed, and build meaningful relationships that inspire students to reach their fullest potential.

At Meridian, no child is simply another face in the crowd. Every student is known, valued, encouraged, and challenged to become the very best version of themselves.

Our staff believes that learning flourishes when students feel safe, respected, supported, and inspired. Every decision we make is guided by one simple question:

"Is this in the best interest of our students?"

That commitment drives everything we do.

Our Vision

At Meridian Elementary School, our vision is to empower every student to achieve at or above grade level in a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment. We strive to nurture curious, engaged learners who take ownership of their growth and demonstrate integrity, empathy, and responsibility in all they do.

We believe education is a shared partnership among students, families, staff, and our community. Through strong relationships, high expectations, and meaningful opportunities for learning and service, we prepare our students to become confident scholars and compassionate citizens who contribute positively to their world.

Our Mission

The school mission is that Meridian students are learning to be proud students and citizens who are here to achieve greatness, both academically and socially in a caring and nurturing environment!

Our Core Values

Everything we do at Meridian is built upon these guiding principles.

Relationships First

Strong relationships are the foundation of successful schools. Every child deserves to know they belong, are respected, and have adults who genuinely care about their success.

Academic Excellence

We believe every student can learn at high levels when provided with excellent instruction, meaningful support, and high expectations.

Leadership

Every child has the ability to lead. Through our Leader in Me framework, students learn to make responsible decisions, work collaboratively, solve problems, and positively influence those around them.

Partnership

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. We believe education is most successful when schools and families work together as true partners.

Character

Academic success is important, but character lasts a lifetime. We intentionally teach integrity, responsibility, kindness, perseverance, empathy, and respect every day.

Growth

Mistakes are opportunities for learning. We encourage every student to embrace challenges, celebrate progress, and continually strive for improvement.

The Whole Child

At Meridian, we educate more than academic subjects.

We intentionally develop the **whole child** by focusing on four essential areas of growth.

Mind	Heart	Body	Spirit
Critical Thinking	Compassion	Healthy Habits	Purpose
Reading	Respect	Physical Activity	Leadership
Mathematics	Empathy	Nutrition	Service
Science	Kindness	Safety	Confidence
Writing	Responsibility	Wellness	Goal Setting
Problem Solving	Integrity	Teamwork	Perseverance

Our goal is for every student to leave Meridian not only academically prepared, but also emotionally resilient, physically healthy, socially responsible, and confident in their ability to make a positive difference in the world.

Our Commitment to Families

When you enroll your child at Meridian Elementary School, you become an important part of our school family.

We promise to:

- ✓ Know your child by name.
- ✓ Provide a safe and welcoming environment.
- ✓ Hold high academic expectations.
- ✓ Communicate openly and honestly.
- ✓ Celebrate growth and achievement.

- ✓ Support students when challenges arise.
 - ✓ Listen to parent concerns respectfully.
 - ✓ Treat every family with dignity and kindness.
 - ✓ Foster leadership, responsibility, and strong character.
 - ✓ Never lose sight of what matters most—your child.
-

The Meridian Difference

At Meridian Elementary School, success is measured by far more than grades and test scores.

We believe success is reflected when:

- A struggling reader discovers confidence in a favorite book.
- A shy student finds the courage to lead a classroom discussion.
- A child learns to solve conflicts with kindness and respect.
- Students take pride in helping one another.
- Families feel welcomed, valued, and heard.
- Teachers inspire curiosity and a lifelong love of learning.
- Every child understands they are capable of achieving great things.

This is what makes Meridian special.

This is **The Meridian Difference**.

Our School Motto

Small School. Big Outcomes.

Growing Leaders. Inspiring Excellence. Changing Lives.

CHAPTER 2

School Schedule & Daily Procedures

Making Every Minute Matter

At Meridian Elementary School, we believe every minute of the school day is an opportunity for learning, growth, leadership, and connection. Our daily schedule is intentionally designed to provide students with strong academic instruction, intervention support, enrichment opportunities, and time to develop important social and leadership skills.

Students are expected to arrive on time, prepared, and ready to learn each day. Beginning the school day successfully helps students build responsibility, confidence, and habits that support lifelong success.

2026–2027 Regular School Day Schedule

Morning Arrival

Time	Activity
7:45–8:10 AM	Breakfast in the Cafeteria / Morning Supervision
8:10–8:15 AM	Flag Salute & Morning Announcements
8:15 AM	Instruction Begins

Important Reminder:

Students should arrive early enough to eat breakfast, prepare for the day, and be ready to begin instruction promptly at 8:15 AM. We will not be providing breakfast after 8:10.

Academic Schedule

Time	Grade Level / Activity
8:15–9:40 AM	Either English Language Arts, or Mathematics Instruction
9:40–9:53 AM	Morning Break — TK–4th Grade
9:53–9:55 AM	Transition Back to Class
9:55–10:08 AM	Morning Break — 5th–8th Grade
10:08–10:10 AM	Transition Back to Class
10:10 AM–12:00 PM	Either English Language Arts, or Mathematics Instruction

Lunch Schedule

Lunch is an important part of the school day where students have time to build relationships, practice responsibility, and enjoy a healthy meal.

Students must spend a minimum of **20 minutes eating in the cafeteria** before participating in recess activities.

Time	Grade Levels
11:35 AM–12:15 PM	TK–4th Grade Lunch
12:00–12:40 PM	5th–8th Grade Lunch

Afternoon Learning Schedule

Time	Activity
12:15–2:45 PM	Instruction, Intervention, Electives, Science, Social Studies, Health, and Enrichment

Intervention Opportunities

Meridian Elementary School is committed to supporting every student. Intervention time provides targeted instruction and support designed to help students strengthen academic skills and continue progressing.

Grade Level	Intervention Time
1st–4th Grade	12:15–12:45 PM
5th–6th Grade	1:00–1:30 PM
7th–8th Grade	1:30–2:00 PM

Enrichment Electives

On **Mondays and Fridays**, students participate in enrichment opportunities designed to encourage creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and exploration.

Elective Time: 2:00–2:45 PM

Students may participate in:

- Robotics
- Theater/Drama
- Agricultural Science
- Art
- Other enrichment opportunities as developed

These opportunities allow students to discover new interests, develop talents, and expand their educational experience beyond traditional academics.

Minimum Day Schedule

Minimum days are designed to provide time for professional collaboration, parent conferences, staff development, and important school improvement activities.

Time	Activity
7:45–8:10 AM	Breakfast / Morning Supervision
8:10–8:15 AM	Flag Salute & Announcements
8:15–9:40 AM	Classroom Instruction
9:40–9:53 AM	Break — TK–4th Grade
9:55–10:08 AM	Break — 5th–8th Grade
10:10 AM–12:40 PM	Continued Instruction & Lunch Lunch is the same as a regular day
12:40–12:45 PM	Clean-up & Dismissal Preparation

Parents and guardians are encouraged to plan accordingly for early dismissal on minimum days.

Attendance Matters

Every Day Counts

At Meridian Elementary School, we believe:

"If you miss a day, you miss out!"

Every school day provides valuable opportunities for students to learn, grow, build relationships, and participate in classroom experiences that cannot always be recreated.

Being present and on time helps students:

- ✓ Stay connected with their learning
 - ✓ Build responsibility and independence
 - ✓ Develop positive habits
 - ✓ Experience academic success
 - ✓ Participate fully in school activities
-

A Message to Families

A consistent daily routine begins at home. We appreciate families helping students arrive on time, prepared, and ready to make each day count.

Together, we can ensure that every student has the opportunity to experience success.

CHAPTER 3

Attendance & Student Success

Every Child. Every Day. Every Opportunity.

At Meridian Elementary School, we believe that consistent attendance is one of the most important factors in student success. Every school day provides valuable opportunities for students to learn new skills, build relationships, participate in classroom discussions, collaborate with classmates, and experience the joy of discovery.

When students miss school, they miss more than assignments—they miss important learning experiences that cannot always be recreated.

At Meridian, we believe:

"Every day matters. Every minute counts. Every student belongs."

Our goal is to partner with families to ensure every student has the opportunity to attend school regularly, arrive on time, and fully engage in their education.

The Importance of Regular Attendance

Research consistently shows that students who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- ✓ Achieve stronger academic outcomes
- ✓ Develop positive learning habits
- ✓ Build stronger relationships with teachers and classmates
- ✓ Participate in extracurricular activities and leadership opportunities
- ✓ Develop responsibility and independence

A single missed day represents more than **300 minutes of lost instructional time**. Over the course of a school year, frequent absences can create learning gaps that become increasingly difficult to overcome.

We encourage every family to make school attendance a priority and help their child develop the lifelong habit of being present, prepared, and engaged.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Parents and guardians play an essential role in establishing strong attendance habits. Families are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day unless they are ill or there is another legally excused reason.
- Schedule medical and personal appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.
- Ensure students arrive on time and ready to learn.
- Notify the school office when their child will be absent.
- Communicate with the school if attendance challenges arise.

If your family experiences circumstances that make regular attendance difficult, please contact the school. We are committed to working with families to identify solutions and provide support.

Reporting Absences

If a student is absent from school, parents/guardians must notify the school office of the reason for the absence.

Absences may be reported by:

- Calling the school office
- Providing a written note
- Communicating through approved school communication methods

The reason for the absence must be provided so the school can accurately maintain attendance records as required by California law.

When returning from an absence, students should work with their teacher to make up missed assignments and learning activities.

Excused Absences

California law identifies specific reasons that absences may be considered excused, including:

- Illness or medical appointments
- Attendance at a funeral for an immediate family member
- Court appearances
- Religious holidays or observances recognized by law

Families are encouraged to minimize absences whenever possible, as even excused absences result in lost instructional opportunities.

Unexcused Absences & Attendance Concerns

Meridian Elementary School is required by California law to monitor student attendance and address excessive absences.

When attendance concerns develop, the school will communicate with families and may provide additional support, including:

- Attendance notifications
- Parent conferences
- Attendance improvement plans
- Support from the Superintendent/Principal
- Referral to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), when required

Our purpose is not to punish families but to ensure every student receives the educational opportunities they deserve.

Tardiness

Being On Time Builds Success

Arriving on time is an important life skill that helps students develop responsibility, organization, and self-discipline.

Students should arrive at school with enough time to:

- Enter campus safely
- Eat breakfast if needed
- Prepare materials
- Be seated and ready to learn when instruction begins

Students are considered tardy if they are not in their classroom, prepared, and ready to begin learning when the instructional day starts.

Students arriving late must report directly to the office to receive an admit slip before entering class.

Excessive Tardies

Frequent tardiness impacts both the individual student and the learning environment.

Repeated tardies may result in:

- Communication with parents/guardians
- Attendance conferences
- Attendance improvement plans
- Loss of certain privileges or activities when appropriate
- Further action as required by California attendance laws

Our goal is to help students develop habits that will benefit them throughout their education and future careers.

Independent Study

Learning Continues Beyond the Classroom

Independent Study Agreements must be completed by the teacher, who must turn in the Agreement to the office with the graded, completed samples of work as soon as possible after the student returns. This is very important because our district revenue is based on how many days each student attends school, and we cannot count attendance for independent study without a completed, graded Agreement and work samples. The agreement must be drawn up and signed (by the teacher, student, and parent) prior to the absence. Each teacher has a copy of the Agreement and the procedures for using it in the Employee Binder. Please follow the check list with dates.

When families know in advance that a student will be absent for an extended period due to travel, illness, or other approved circumstances, an Independent Study Agreement may be available.

Families requesting Independent Study should:

1. Contact the classroom teacher or office as early as possible.
2. Allow adequate time for teachers to prepare assignments.
3. Ensure all assigned work is completed and returned according to the agreement.

Successfully completed Independent Study allows students to continue their learning while away from campus and helps reduce disruption to their academic progress.

Saturday School & Attendance Recovery

Meridian Elementary School provides Saturday School opportunities throughout the year to support students who have missed instructional time.

Saturday School provides students with:

- Academic support

- Opportunities to complete assignments
- Attendance recovery
- Continued connection to learning

Students participating in Saturday School are expected to:

- Arrive on time
- Participate appropriately
- Remain for the full scheduled session

Saturday School is designed as a support opportunity that helps students remain successful.

Saturday School is always from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Make-Up Learning Opportunities

Students who are unable to attend Saturday School may have additional opportunities during designated intervention times.

These opportunities allow students to recover missed instructional time while continuing to receive academic support.

When Attendance Becomes a Concern

Meridian Elementary School believes in early communication and partnership.

If attendance concerns continue, the district may follow California's required attendance intervention process, which may include:

1. Written attendance notification.
2. Parent conference with school administration.
3. Development of an attendance improvement plan.
4. Referral to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), if necessary.

The purpose of this process is to ensure every student has access to their right to an education.

A Message from Meridian

Your child's presence matters.

When your child walks through our doors each morning, they are not just attending school—they are joining a community that believes in them, supports them, and challenges them to grow.

Thank you for partnering with us to make attendance a priority.

Together, we can ensure:

Every Child. Every Day. Every Opportunity.

Chapter 4

DAILY SCHOOL PROCEDURES & CAMPUS EXPECTATIONS

Creating a Safe, Respectful, and Responsible Meridian Tiger Community

At Meridian Elementary School, we believe that every student deserves a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment where they can learn, grow, and reach their full potential. Our daily procedures and campus expectations are designed to create consistency, promote responsibility, and ensure that every member of our school community feels valued.

Students, families, and staff all play an important role in maintaining a positive school culture. We ask that everyone works together to support our expectations of being **safe, respectful, responsible, and ready to learn.**

Arrival Procedures

The school day begins with students arriving ready to learn and prepared for success.

- Students may arrive on campus beginning at **7:45 a.m.** unless they are participating in a supervised before-school activity or arriving by school transportation.
- Students should not arrive early, as supervision is not available before 7:45 a.m.
- Upon arrival, students should:
 - Enter campus safely.
 - Follow directions from supervising staff.
 - Eat breakfast if needed.
 - Remain in designated areas until the first bell.
 - Prepare themselves for a successful day of learning.

The cafeteria opens at **7:45 a.m.** for breakfast. Students who are eating breakfast should enter the cafeteria and follow cafeteria expectations.

The instructional day begins promptly at **8:15 a.m.** Students are expected to be in their classrooms, seated, and ready to begin learning when the bell rings.

Breakfast and Cafeteria Expectations

Meridian Elementary School is proud to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students.

To maintain a safe and respectful cafeteria environment, students are expected to:

- Use appropriate table manners.
- Speak respectfully and maintain reasonable noise levels.
- Clean up their eating area.
- Follow directions from cafeteria staff and supervising adults.
- Respect the cafeteria, equipment, and the belongings of others.

Students may bring lunch from home or participate in the school meal program. Students should communicate their lunch choice each morning as directed by classroom teachers.

Campus Supervision and Student Movement

Student safety is our highest priority. Students are expected to remain in supervised areas throughout the school day.

Students must:

- Walk safely on campus.
- Use sidewalks and designated pathways.
- Follow directions from all Meridian staff members.
- Remain with their assigned class or supervised area.
- Request permission before leaving a classroom or assigned area.

Students may not enter classrooms, buildings, or restricted areas without permission and appropriate adult supervision.

Recess Expectations

Recess is an important part of the school day because it allows students to build friendships, develop teamwork skills, and enjoy physical activity.

During recess, students are expected to:

- Follow all playground safety rules.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- Use playground equipment appropriately.
- Include others and demonstrate kindness.
- Follow directions from yard supervisors immediately.

The following behaviors are not permitted:

- Physical play, wrestling, tackling, or horseplay.
- Throwing objects in unsafe ways.
- Kicking or throwing balls toward buildings, fences, trees, or areas where damage may occur.
- Climbing on structures or areas not designed for student use.
- Leaving supervised areas without permission.

Students who choose unsafe behaviors may receive consequences, including loss of recess privileges, parent communication, or additional interventions based on the severity and frequency of the behavior.

Student Responsibility and Personal Belongings

Students are responsible for taking care of their personal belongings and respecting the property of others.

Students should:

- Clearly label personal items whenever possible.
- Keep backpacks, jackets, lunch containers, and other belongings organized.
- Report lost items to the office.
- Respect school property, including technology, books, furniture, playground equipment, and facilities.

Meridian Elementary School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal items brought to school.

Dismissal Procedures

At the end of the school day, students must follow their designated dismissal plan.

Students must:

- Go directly to their assigned dismissal location.
- Follow directions from staff supervising dismissal.
- Leave campus promptly unless participating in a supervised activity, intervention, athletics, or the Extended Learning Opportunity Program (ELOP).

The playground is not available for unsupervised student use after school.

Parents/guardians picking up students must follow all school procedures to ensure student safety. Changes to transportation arrangements must be communicated to the school office before dismissal whenever possible.

Visitor and Campus Access Procedures

To maintain a safe learning environment, all visitors must:

- Check in through the school office upon arrival.
- Sign in and receive a visitor identification sticker.
- Remain in approved areas while on campus.

Visitors are expected to follow all school procedures and directions from staff.

Classroom visits are welcomed and encouraged when arranged in advance with the teacher and approved through the school office. This allows us to protect instructional time while maintaining strong family partnerships.

A Message to Our Meridian Families

Our school is strongest when families and staff work together. We appreciate your partnership in helping students develop responsibility, kindness, respect, and pride in being a Meridian Tiger.

By working together, we create a school environment where every student feels safe, supported, and inspired to achieve greatness.

Together, we are building a community where students can learn, lead, and thrive.

Chapter 5

HEALTH SERVICES & STUDENT WELL-BEING

At Meridian Elementary School, the health, safety, and well-being of every student is one of our highest priorities. We recognize that students learn best when they feel safe, supported, and ready to participate fully in the school day.

Our staff works closely with families to address student health needs while maintaining a safe learning environment for all students.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to keep the school office informed of any medical conditions, health concerns, allergies, or changes that may affect their child's ability to participate successfully at school.

Emergency Information

Every student must have a current emergency information form on file in the school office.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that the school has updated information, including:

- Current phone numbers.
- Emergency contacts.
- Medical information.
- Allergy information.
- Authorized individuals who may pick up their child.

Please notify the school office immediately whenever any emergency contact or health information changes.

Accurate emergency information allows our staff to respond quickly and appropriately if a student becomes ill or an emergency situation occurs.

Illness at School

Students who are ill should remain home to recover and prevent the spread of illness to others.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the following procedures will occur:

- The student will be evaluated by school personnel.
- The parent/guardian will be contacted when necessary.
- The student may need to be picked up from school if they are unable to continue participating safely in classroom activities.
- If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the school will contact the emergency contacts listed on the student's emergency form.

Students will not be released to individuals who are not listed as authorized contacts unless appropriate permission has been provided.

In the event of a serious emergency, the school will contact emergency services and follow established emergency protocols.

Allergies and Medical Conditions

Families must notify the school of any medical condition, allergy, or health concern that may impact their child during the school day.

This information allows the school to:

- Develop appropriate safety plans when necessary.
- Communicate important information with appropriate staff.
- Provide reasonable support to help students safely participate in school activities.

Parents are encouraged to work collaboratively with the school to ensure their child's health and safety needs are understood and addressed.

Medication Procedures

Meridian Elementary School follows California Education Code requirements regarding medication administration at school.

School personnel may not administer prescription or over-the-counter medication to students unless the required documentation has been completed.

If medication must be administered during the school day:

1. A written request from the parent/guardian and the child's physician must be submitted to the school office.
2. Medication must be provided in the original pharmacy container or original packaging.
3. Medication must be stored in the school office unless otherwise approved through a formal health plan.
4. Students may not carry or self-administer medication unless specifically authorized according to applicable laws and school procedures.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Prescription medication.
- Over-the-counter medication.
- Pain relievers.
- Allergy medication.
- Inhalers or emergency medications.

Families should contact the school office if they have questions regarding medication procedures.

Emergency Procedures & School Safety

The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. Meridian Elementary School maintains emergency procedures designed to respond effectively to a variety of situations.

Emergency procedures may include responses to:

- Fire.
- Earthquake.
- Severe weather.
- Security concerns.
- Medical emergencies.
- Other unforeseen situations.

Students and staff participate in regular safety drills throughout the school year to ensure everyone understands how to respond calmly and appropriately.

During an emergency:

- Students must follow directions from staff immediately.
- Families should rely on official communication from the school district.
- Parents/guardians should not come to campus during an active emergency unless directed to do so, as this may interfere with emergency response efforts.

The district will communicate important information to families as quickly as possible through available communication systems.

Campus Safety and Security

To support student safety, Meridian Elementary School utilizes safety practices and procedures throughout the school day.

These include:

- Visitor check-in procedures.
- Supervised student areas.
- Exterior security cameras.
- Bus video monitoring.
- Controlled access to campus facilities.

All visitors must check in through the school office and follow campus expectations while on school grounds.

After-School Programs & Extended Learning Opportunities

Meridian Elementary School is proud to provide opportunities beyond the regular school day to support academic growth, enrichment, and student engagement.

Our after-school programming provides students with opportunities for:

- Homework support.
- Academic intervention.
- Tutoring.
- Enrichment activities.
- Social development.
- Positive peer interactions.

The Extended Learning Opportunity Program (ELOP) is designed to support the whole child by providing meaningful activities that extend learning beyond the traditional school day.

Students participating in after-school programs are expected to:

- Follow all school rules and behavior expectations.
- Respect staff members and peers.
- Participate actively and positively.
- Remain in assigned locations unless given permission to move.

Transportation and Pick-Up from After-School Programs

Families participating in after-school programs must follow all established dismissal and transportation procedures.

Parents/guardians should:

- Ensure the school has accurate emergency contact information.
- Communicate any changes in transportation plans.
- Pick up students promptly at the designated dismissal time if transportation is not provided.

Students who repeatedly fail to follow after-school expectations may lose participation privileges.

A Partnership Between School and Home

At Meridian Elementary School, we believe student success depends on a strong partnership between families and educators. By communicating openly, preparing for emergencies, supporting healthy habits, and working together, we create a safe environment where every student can learn, grow, and thrive.

Together, we are building a stronger Meridian Tiger community where every child is valued, supported, and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Chapter 6

Student Expectations

Building Successful Meridian Tigers

At Meridian Elementary School, we believe every student has the ability to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. Our goal is to create a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment where every student feels valued, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.

Through the combination of our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework and Leader in Me principles, students will learn the importance of responsibility, leadership, self-confidence, and making positive choices. We believe that strong character and academic success are developed together.

Every Meridian Tiger is expected to:

- Respect Yourself
- Respect Others
- Respect Your School
- Be Kind
- Be Positive
- Be Responsible
- Keep Hands and Objects to Yourself

Students are expected to demonstrate these qualities in classrooms, on the playground, on the bus, during school events, and in all interactions with others.

PBIS Expectations

Meridian Elementary School uses Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to establish clear expectations and recognize students who demonstrate positive behavior.

PBIS is built on the belief that students can be taught appropriate behaviors just as they are taught academic skills. Staff members will provide students with clear expectations, positive reinforcement, and support to help them make responsible choices.

Students who demonstrate positive behavior may be recognized through classroom celebrations, school-wide acknowledgments, leadership opportunities, and other positive incentives.

When students make mistakes, staff members will work with them to understand the impact of their choices, learn from the experience, and develop strategies to make better decisions in the future.

Leader in Me Expectations

As a Leader in Me school, Meridian Elementary focuses on developing the whole child by helping students discover their strengths, build confidence, and take ownership of their learning and actions.

Students will be encouraged to practice leadership skills by:

- Taking responsibility for their choices and actions
- Setting goals and working toward improvement
- Demonstrating kindness and respect
- Working collaboratively with others
- Showing initiative and problem-solving skills
- Becoming leaders within their classroom, school, and community

Our goal is for every student to understand that they have unique talents and abilities and that they can positively influence those around them.

Discipline Procedures

Meridian Elementary School believes discipline is an opportunity for learning, growth, and reflection. Our goal is not simply to correct behavior, but to help students develop self-discipline, responsibility, and the ability to make positive choices.

Student behavior will be addressed based on the severity and frequency of the behavior. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

As a part of our PBIS process, we will be implementing Minor's and Major's for our discipline process.

Some things will always be a Minor, and some things will always be a Major.

- Classroom reminders and redirection

- Teacher conferences with students
- Reflection opportunities
- Loss of privileges
- Parent/guardian communication
- Restorative conversations
- Detention
- Behavior contracts or intervention plans
- Referral to administration
- Suspension or other disciplinary action when required by California Education Code

Students who engage in serious misconduct, including behavior that threatens the safety of others, may receive immediate administrative consequences.

Examples of serious misconduct may include:

- Fighting or physical aggression
- Threatening or intimidating others
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination
- Possession of dangerous or prohibited items
- Destruction of property
- Defiance or disrespect toward staff members
- Use of inappropriate, vulgar, or threatening language

Meridian Elementary is committed to fairness, consistency, and communication with families when addressing student behavior.

Education Code sections (48900 and 48915) are the areas that cover the most serious

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones and personal electronic devices can create distractions and interfere with student learning. To maintain a focused and safe learning environment, cell phones may not be used during the school day or during ELOP after school.

Students who bring a cell phone to school must:

- Keep the phone turned off
- Keep the phone stored in a backpack or designated secure location
- Not accessing or using the phone from 7:45 a.m. until dismissal to go home unless given permission by school staff

If a student violates the cell phone policy, the following progressive consequences may occur:

First Offense:

The phone will be collected by staff, the parent/guardian will be notified, and the phone may be returned at the end of the school day.

Second Offense:

The phone will be collected, locked in the office, the parent/guardian will be notified and required to come pick up the phone, and additional restrictions may be placed on bringing the phone to school.

Third and Subsequent Offenses:

Additional consequences may include loss of cell phone privileges, detention, Saturday School, or other disciplinary action.

The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal electronic devices.

Student Dress Code

Student clothing should support a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment. Students should arrive at school dressed appropriately for participation in all school activities.

The following expectations apply:

1. Clothing must provide appropriate coverage and conceal undergarments at all times.
2. Students must wear appropriate footwear. Shoes must allow students to safely participate in physical education, recess, and other activities.
3. Clothing, accessories, or items that promote drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, inappropriate language, or gang affiliation are not permitted.
4. Pajamas, slippers, revealing clothing, or clothing that interferes with the learning environment are not permitted except on approved spirit days.
5. Hats and hoods may not be worn inside buildings unless approved for a specific school activity or medical reason.
6. Clothing must not create a distraction or safety concern as determined by school administration.

As mentioned above, as a part of our PBIS process, we will be implementing Minor's and Major's for our discipline process.

Some things will always be a Minor, and some things will always be a Major.

If a student's clothing does not meet school expectations, families may be contacted, and the student may be asked to change clothing.

Examples are as follows:

MERIDIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2026–2027 VISUAL DRESS CODE

★ DRESS COMFORTABLY. DRESS SAFELY. COME READY TO LEARN! ★

 **SCHOOL APPROPRIATE**

CLOTHES SHOULD BE CLEAN, IN GOOD REPAIR, AND PROVIDE APPROPRIATE COVERAGE.

 **TOPS**

- T-shirts, polos, sweatshirts & sweaters
- Tank tops & sleeveless tops with straps no **less than 2" wide**
- Tops should cover the chest, back and midsection



**TANK TOP STRAPS**
NO LESS THAN 2 INCHES WIDE

 **BOTTOMS**

- Jeans & pants
- Shorts
- Skirts & dresses
- Leggings & athletic wear
- Shorts should go to **mid thigh**



**SHORTS LENGTH**
GO TO MID THIGH

Playground Expectations

Recess and playground time are important opportunities for students to build friendships, practice teamwork, and develop leadership skills. Students are expected to play safely and respectfully.

Students must:

- Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves
- Use playground equipment safely and appropriately
- Follow directions from all supervising adults
- Include others and demonstrate kindness
- Stay in designated supervised areas
- Use sports equipment responsibly
- Report unsafe behavior or concerns to an adult

The following behaviors are not permitted:

- Fighting, pushing, or physical play
- Throwing objects at buildings, students, or unsafe areas
- Climbing on unsafe structures
- Horseplay that creates a safety concern

- Bullying, teasing, or excluding others

Students who choose unsafe behaviors may lose playground privileges or receive additional consequences.

Technology Use Expectations

Technology is an important learning tool at Meridian Elementary School. Students are expected to use school technology responsibly and appropriately.

Students must:

- Use devices only for educational purposes
- Follow teacher directions when using technology
- Protect their assigned device
- Keep passwords and account information private
- Report damaged or inappropriate content immediately
- Use respectful language and behavior online

Students may not:

- Access inappropriate websites or content
- Attempt to bypass security settings
- Damage or misuse technology equipment
- Use technology to harass, threaten, or harm others

Technology privileges may be restricted or removed if students fail to follow expectations.

Bus Rules and Expectations

Riding the Meridian Elementary School bus is a privilege provided for students. Student safety is our highest priority, and all students must follow bus expectations at all times.

Students must:

- Follow directions from the bus driver
- Remain seated while the bus is moving
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves
- Use appropriate language and behavior
- Keep the aisles clear
- Respect the bus, driver, and other passengers

Students may not:

- Throw objects
- Fight or engage in unsafe behavior
- Use profanity or inappropriate language
- Damage the bus
- Distract the driver in any way

Bus behavior referrals may result in consequences, including temporary or permanent loss of bus privileges. Serious safety violations may result in immediate removal from transportation services.

The bus driver is the authority figure on the bus, and all directions must be followed immediately.

School Bus Safety

School Bus Danger Zones

The area within **10 feet of the perimeter of the school bus** is known as the **Danger Zone**. Students should remain at least **10 feet away from the bus** except when loading or unloading.

The vast majority of school bus accidents and student injuries occur **outside the bus** within this danger zone. For this reason:

- Students should never go under or near the bus to retrieve papers, lunch boxes, backpacks, or other personal belongings.
- If an item falls near or underneath the bus, students should immediately notify the bus driver and wait for instructions.
- Students must always follow the directions of the bus driver when loading, unloading, or crossing near the bus.

Board-Approved Transportation Expectations

Students riding the Meridian Elementary School bus are subject to the transportation rules established by the Governing Board of Trustees and enforced by the bus driver and school administration.

Parent Pick-Up and Drop-Off Responsibilities

To help ensure student safety and maintain the transportation schedule:

- Parents or guardians should be present at the designated bus stop **at least five (5) minutes before** the scheduled pick-up or drop-off time.
- The bus driver operates on a schedule and **cannot wait for late arrivals** at bus stops.
- If a parent or guardian is not present at the scheduled drop-off time, the student will be transported back to Meridian Elementary School for pickup.
- If a parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the appropriate authorities may be notified in accordance with District procedures.

School Bus Rules

Meridian Elementary School operates its own school bus to safely transport students to and from school. Riding the school bus is a **privilege** provided by the Governing Board of Trustees.

Students are expected to follow all bus rules and the directions of the bus driver at all times. Willful disregard of these expectations may result in disciplinary action, including the suspension or loss of bus riding privileges.

These transportation rules apply during regular bus routes as well as on all school-sponsored field trips and activities.

Please keep these rules in a convenient place and review them with your child throughout the school year.

Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremony Requirements

The Eighth-Grade Promotion Ceremony is a special opportunity to recognize students for their accomplishments and successful completion of their elementary school education. Participation in the promotion ceremony is a privilege earned through consistent academic achievement, responsible behavior, and regular school attendance throughout the school year.

To participate in the Meridian Elementary School Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremony, students must meet **all** of the following requirements:

- **Maintain a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.00 or higher for the school year, with no "F" grades during the third trimester.**
- **Receive satisfactory citizenship marks.**
- **Have no more than ten (10) days of absence during the school year**, including excused absences, unexcused absences, personal absences, and trancies.
- **Receive no more than five (5) discipline referrals during the third trimester**, including both Minor and Major referrals.
- **Receive no more than ten (10) total discipline referrals during the school year**, consisting of no more than **six (6) Minor referrals** and **four (4) Major referrals**.
- **Receive no more than two (2) days of suspension during the school year.**

Students who do not meet one or more of these requirements may not be eligible to participate in the Eighth-Grade Promotion Ceremony. The Superintendent/Principal or designee will make the final determination regarding eligibility in accordance with District policies and procedures.

"The Superintendent/Principal reserves the authority to review unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when doing so is in the best interest of the student and the District."

This applies to the entirety of the Parent/Student Handbook.

Our Commitment to Families

At Meridian Elementary School, we believe strong partnerships between school and home create the greatest opportunities for student success. We appreciate families working with us to teach responsibility, kindness, perseverance, and leadership.

Together, we will continue building a school community where every student feels safe, supported, respected, and prepared to achieve greatness.

Chapter 7—Annual Parent Notifications and Legal Rights."

Parent Concerns and/or Complaints

The Meridian Elementary School District Board of Trustees has established a procedure for addressing parent concerns and complaints. Our goal is to resolve questions, concerns, and disagreements promptly, respectfully, and at the lowest appropriate level whenever possible.

Our Commitment

Meridian Elementary School District believes that open communication and respectful collaboration are essential to maintaining a positive school environment.

Concerns

If you have a concern, please begin with the appropriate person:

A. General Information

- If your concern involves general school information, please contact the school office for assistance.

B. Classroom or Teacher Concerns

- If your concern relates to your child's classroom or teacher, please contact the school office to schedule an appointment with the teacher or request that the teacher return your call.

Complaints or Problems

Step 1 – Concerns Involving a Staff Member

When a concern involves a staff member, the following process should be followed:

1. Contact the school office and request an appointment to meet with the staff member.

2. Meet with the staff member and calmly discuss your concern, problem, or complaint. Meetings should not occur during instructional time.
3. Both parties should make every reasonable effort to resolve the matter in a respectful and professional manner.

Step 2 – If the Matter Is Not Resolved

If the concern remains unresolved or you are not satisfied following the initial meeting:

1. Request a conference with the school Principal and the staff member to discuss the matter.
2. If the concern is still unresolved, request a conference with the District Superintendent/Principal and the staff member.
3. If a satisfactory resolution has still not been reached, you may request a formal complaint form from the Superintendent. Completed complaint forms should be submitted to the Superintendent for review. If appropriate, the matter may be referred to the Board of Trustees for consideration in closed session in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Notification of Rights Under FERPA

The **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights regarding the student's education records. These rights include:

1. Right to Inspect and Review Education Records

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records within **45 days** after the school receives a written request for access.

Requests should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent/Principal or other appropriate school official and should clearly identify the records requested. The District will arrange access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. Right to Request Amendment of Education Records

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that the District amend education records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise violate the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Requests for amendment must:

- Be submitted in writing to the Superintendent/Principal or appropriate school official;

- Clearly identify the portion of the record being challenged; and
- State the reason why the record should be amended.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested, the parent or eligible student will be notified in writing of the decision and informed of the right to request a FERPA hearing. Information regarding hearing procedures will be provided at that time.

3. Right to Consent to Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information

Parents and eligible students have the right to provide written consent before personally identifiable information contained in a student's education records is disclosed, except to the extent FERPA authorizes disclosure without prior consent.

One exception permits disclosure to **school officials with legitimate educational interests**.

A school official includes, but is not limited to:

- Administrators
- Supervisors
- Teachers and instructional staff
- Support staff members
- Health or medical personnel
- School resource or law enforcement personnel
- Members of the Governing Board
- Contractors, consultants, attorneys, auditors, therapists, medical providers, or other individuals performing institutional services or functions on behalf of the District
- Parents, students, or volunteers serving on official committees, including disciplinary or grievance committees, or assisting another school official in performing legitimate educational duties

A school official has a **legitimate educational interest** when the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities on behalf of the District.

4. Right to File a FERPA Complaint

Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the **U.S. Department of Education** regarding an alleged failure by Meridian Elementary School District to comply with FERPA.

Complaints should be directed to:

Student Privacy Policy Office (SPPO)

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Additional information regarding FERPA may be found through the U.S. Department of Education's Student Privacy Policy Office.

Meridian Elementary School District is committed to protecting the privacy of student education records and complying with all applicable federal and state laws governing student records.

Tobacco-Free Schools

The Governing Board of Meridian Elementary School District recognizes the health hazards associated with smoking, the use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, and other nicotine-related products, including the effects of secondhand smoke exposure. The Board is committed to providing a healthy, safe, and productive environment for all students, staff members, families, and visitors.

The Board prohibits the use, possession, or distribution of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, and other nicotine-related products at any time in:

- District-owned or leased buildings;
- District property;
- District vehicles; and
- Any school-sponsored activity, program, athletic event, or event under the jurisdiction of the District.

This prohibition applies to all employees, students, parents, visitors, and any other individuals participating in District activities.

Legal References:

- California Health and Safety Code §104420
- California Labor Code §6404.5
- 20 United States Code §6083

Smoking, the use of tobacco-related products, and the disposal of tobacco-related waste are also prohibited within **25 feet of any playground area**, except on a public sidewalk located within 25 feet of the playground, as permitted by law.

Legal Reference:

- California Health and Safety Code §104495

Meridian Elementary School District maintains a partnership with the County Office of Education to support tobacco-free schools. Through this partnership, designated staff members assist in communicating, promoting, and reinforcing tobacco-free expectations throughout our school community.

Meridian Elementary School District appreciates the cooperation of students, families, staff, and visitors in maintaining a healthy and safe environment for everyone.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

Notification of Parent Rights

The **Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)** affords parents and eligible students certain rights regarding the District's administration of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical examinations.

These rights include:

1. Right to Consent Before Certain Surveys

Parents have the right to provide consent before students are required to participate in any survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information surveys") when the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
 3. Sex behavior, attitudes, or related information;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom students or respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as those with attorneys, physicians, or religious advisors;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian; and
 8. Income information, other than information required by law to determine eligibility for educational programs or financial assistance.
-

2. Right to Receive Notice and Opt a Student Out of Certain Activities

Parents have the right to receive notice and an opportunity to opt their student out of:

1. Any protected information survey, regardless of whether the survey is funded by the U.S. Department of Education;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the District or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, except for:
 - Hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings;
 - Physical examinations or screenings permitted or required under California law; or
 - Other health-related screenings required by law;
 3. Activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing purposes, sales, or distribution to others.
-

3. Right to Inspect Certain Materials

Parents have the right to inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Protected information surveys administered to students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional materials used as part of the educational curriculum.
-

Transfer of Rights

These rights transfer from the parent/guardian to the student when the student reaches **18 years of age** or becomes an **emancipated minor under applicable state law**.

Annual Notification and Parent Review Opportunities

Meridian Elementary School District will directly notify parents of these policies annually at the beginning of each school year and after any substantive changes.

The District will also provide direct notification to parents of students who are scheduled to participate in activities or surveys covered by PPRA and will provide an opportunity for parents to review applicable materials and opt their child out when required.

Activities covered by these requirements include:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes;
 - Administration of protected information surveys not funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education; and
 - Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.
-

Filing a Complaint

Parents who believe their rights under PPRA have been violated may file a complaint with:

Student Privacy Policy Office (SPPO)
U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Meridian Elementary School District is committed to protecting student privacy and ensuring compliance with all applicable federal and state laws regarding student information, surveys, and educational records.

Civil Rights

Meridian Elementary School District participates in federally funded programs and is committed to providing equal access and opportunity to all students, families, and community members. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the District and its programs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (such as Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, or other accessible formats) should contact the responsible State or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center.

To request accommodations or assistance, individuals may contact:

USDA TARGET Center

Telephone: (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY)
or through the Federal Relay Service: (866) 877-8339

Filing a Civil Rights Complaint

To file a complaint alleging discrimination related to a USDA program, individuals may complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027), which is available online through the USDA website, at any USDA office, or by contacting USDA directly.

A complaint may be submitted by:

Mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

Fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442

Email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

Complaints must include the complainant's name, address, telephone number or other means of contacting the complainant, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action with sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights about the nature and date of the alleged civil rights violation.

Meridian Elementary School District does not discriminate in its programs, services, or activities and is committed to ensuring all students have access to a safe, respectful, inclusive, and supportive learning environment.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

MERIDIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

School Year: 2026-2027

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

The Meridian Elementary School District Parent/Student Handbook has been provided to you to help ensure that students and families understand the policies, procedures, expectations, and responsibilities of our school community.

Please review the handbook carefully with your student. The handbook contains important information regarding school rules, attendance, student conduct, safety procedures, academic expectations, technology use, and other school and district policies.

By signing below, we acknowledge that:

- We have received or have been provided with access to the Meridian Elementary School District Parent/Student Handbook.
- We understand that we are responsible for reading and becoming familiar with the information contained in the handbook.
- We understand that students are expected to follow the rules, policies, and behavioral expectations outlined in the handbook.
- We understand that the handbook may be updated or revised during the school year as necessary.
- We understand that questions regarding the handbook or school policies may be directed to the school office or appropriate district personnel.
- We understand that signing this form does not necessarily mean that we agree with every policy but confirms that we have received access to the handbook and understand our responsibility to review it.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____ **Teacher:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have received or have been provided with access to the Parent/Student Handbook and have had an opportunity to review it with my student. I understand that I am responsible for supporting my student in following the expectations and policies described in the handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____