



Merrill PTA meeting minutes

Mon, Feb. 17, 2020

6:30pm

Merrill Middle School library

12 attending:

| | | | |
|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| Rose G | Stephanie M | Sara A | Emily KS |
| Kate P | Karina C | Theresa C | Heather C |
| Holly KO | Emily C | Channon T | Sara R |

Principal's Update – Mrs. Panek

Important upcoming dates:

- Teacher development (no school) on Tues, Feb 25.
- Spring break March 16-20, students return Thurs, March 26.
- Spring conferences on March 24 (open conferences) and March 25 (targeted/invitation only)
- Incoming 6th grade orientation on April 30
- 8th grade promotion & dance on May 27

Like many other schools, Merrill is challenged by increased frequency/severity of **behavioral issues** combined with a decrease in alternative program funding/support.

➡ *The PTA encourages parents to urge [state legislators](#), especially those on the [Education Committee](#), to increase public school funding levels. Also, consider joining the [DMPS Community Legislative Action Team](#).*

Overcrowding will continue in the 2020-21 school year. Merrill is projecting a record 830 students next year (we're currently stretched past capacity at 804 students). Merrill administration, teachers, and staff continue to work creatively to minimize class size – key changes under consideration next year include:

- Moving to a 6-period schedule (vs 7 periods)
- World language class every other day (vs daily)
- Splitting lunch periods for more seating and less chaos
- 4 new full-time core teachers (losing 1 world language instructor so net 3 new add to staff)
- New behavioral interventionist (add to staff)

➡ *The PTA encourages parents to contact [DMPS administration](#) and [school board members](#) with concerns about overcrowding at Merrill.*

Recent PTA Accomplishments

- **Supporting music programs** – Funding for band/orchestra solo festivals was cut from the district budget. The PTA will be sponsoring these important music events. (Rose G)
- **Teacher appreciation events** – Thanks to the generosity of Merrill parents, teachers and staff enjoyed a holiday cookie exchange, items from their [Amazon Wish Lists](#), a delicious breakfast spread, and new pencils. (Sarah R)
- **Merrill Matters: Digital Citizenship** – Deb Vail from Heartland AEA shared insights, tips, and [resources](#) for helping kids manage their digital behaviors. Due to the popularity and urgency of this topic, another meeting is in the works... details to come. (Sara A)
- **PTA financials are in good shape**, thanks to the generosity of Merrill parents and community members. Recent successes include fundraising via Facebook, apparel sales, and special events. (Theresa C)

Upcoming/Ongoing PTA Events + Opportunities to help

1. Parents' Night Out fundraiser (Rose G)

- Sat, March 28 at [RDG](#) downtown
- Auction items, raffle, food, drinks, and fun!
- Mark your calendars, and please contact Rose if you can donate goods/services for or help solicit donations. More info to come.
- Our ability to raise PTA funds and to continue helping Merrill students and teachers depends on generous donations.

2. Teacher Appreciation events (Sarah R)

- 2/24 teacher development breakfast
- Kleenex & Clorox wipes drive
- 3/24-25 Spring conference meals
- May 4-8 teacher appreciation week & [Amazon wish list](#)

3. Book Fair (Karina C)

- April 30, during incoming 6th grade orientation night

More ways to help:

- [Donations & Giving ideas](#) including [teachers' Amazon Wish List](#)
- [Short-term volunteer opportunities](#) including Spring Parents Night Out fundraising event planner
- [Ongoing volunteer opportunities](#) including 2020-21 PTA president/board positions
- Box Tops (Amy D) – [Download the new mobile app](#) to scan receipts
- 8th grade promotion – **HELP NEEDED**
 - Mid-May promotion celebration at Roosevelt, dance at Merrill
- Science Fair needs coordinator (Rose G) – **TRANSITION OPPORTUNITY**
- PTA president (Rose G) – **HELP NEEDED, TRANSITION OPPORTUNITY**

PTA Decisions/Motions

2/11/20 via email – decision made to **pay \$400 to sponsor Merrill band's Solo Festival fees** (as of 2020, this annual event was cut from DMPS funding).

The 2nd annual **Merrill Parents' Night Out fundraiser will be held on Saturday, March 28.**

Housekeeping

The next PTA meeting will be Mon, March 9, at 6:30pm in the Merrill library.

PTA generally meets the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30pm in the Merrill school library. Upcoming 2019-20 schedule:

- Mar 9
- Apr 20
- No May meeting

Merrill PTA board 2019-20

President: Rose Green

Treasurer: Theresa Chivers

Secretary: Holly Kilborn O'Neall

Communications: Kristen Erickson, Holly Kilborn O'Neall

Membership & Community Relations: Sarah Witt

Apparel: Megan Tempero

Helping Hands: Julie Hahn

Teacher Appreciation: Sarah Ramsey

Book Fairs: Karina Casini

School Supply Kits: Emily Cataldi/Kate Evans

Box Tops: Amy Dagitz

IB Liaison: Marquis Ellis

All Merrill PTA meetings are open to families and community members interested in helping students.

Contact Rose at: roseDOTgreenATcbdsmDOTCOM or 773.844.1782

Find more information at <https://merrillpta.wordpress.com/>

Connect with us at <https://www.facebook.com/merrillpta/>

Read Mrs. Panek's "Merrill Minute" monthly newsletter for more PTA information