

Merlin Messenger

Parent Newsletter - January



Believe the **BEST**



Happy New Year! It's hard to believe that it's already 2024. It's that time of the year again when we reflect on the past and look forward to the future. The new year brings new beginnings and a chance to start fresh. Take some time to sit down with your Merlin and discuss what they want to accomplish in the second half of the school year. Encourage them to establish a goal and devise a strategy to achieve it. We're excited to see what 2024 has in store for our Merlins!

Rezoning Message

Lamar CISD looks forward to opening new elementary schools in the fall of 2024 and 2025, resulting in attendance boundary changes for some current elementary schools.

The district's process is to collect feedback from parents regarding attendance boundary options through a survey sent directly to parents via e-mail. We specifically look to include stakeholders from the potentially impacted campuses/areas.

To ensure that you receive the survey and have an opportunity to provide feedback, please ensure that your current contact information is available in Skyward by January 3.

This survey will be sent on January 17 and will remain open until January 31. The results will be presented to the Board in February.

Attendance Boundary Committee

We are in need of parent(s) to represent our campus on the Attendance Boundary Committee. If you are interested in serving as a representative for McNeill Elementary please complete the link below by Sunday, January 7th. Selected participants will be notified.

Attendance Boundary Committee Interest Form

2nd 9 Weeks Report Cards

As a reminder, report cards will now be found in the student portfolio section in your Skyward Family Access account.

Report cards will be available for parents to view on **Friday, January 5th** in Skyward.

Please see the attached guide down below for the simple, 4-step process to access your child(ren)'s grade report.

If you need help with Family Access, please contact our secretary, Mindy Gonzalez, mgonzalez06@lcisd.org.

How to view progress reports and report cards in Family Access.pdf

[Download](#)

297.3 KB

JANUARY 15, 2024
Student & Staff Holiday - No School

HAPPY MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ★★★ DAY ★★★

YOU ARE INVITED TO MCNEILL'S

International FESTIVAL

FOOD • MUSIC • PERFORMANCES

JANUARY 25, 2024 5:30 - 7:30 PM
FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

INTERACTIVE EXHIBITS



LIVE PERFORMANCES



FOOD TRUCKS



FAMILIES, WE NEED YOU! PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR FESTIVAL.

EMAIL LAREINA.LIM@LCISD.ORG IF INTERESTED

Spirit Store Open Closes Jan. 3

MCNEILL ELEMENTARY SPIRIT STORE 2023

<https://gogandy.com/mcneill-elementary23>

SALE ENDS: January 3rd!!



1. Go online 2. Select your items 3. Securely check out



Club Information - January

Our clubs are underway. It is important that parents pick up or drop off students on time. We appreciate your support! Below you will find a list of clubs, meeting dates, and sponsor name(s). Please reach out to the club sponsor with any questions.

Club Name

NEHS - Monday

- January Date(s): 1/8
- Sponsors - Ms. Patterson/Mr. Jones

Checkers Club - Mondays

- January Date(s): 1/22, 1/29
- Sponsors - Mr. Jones

Girls in STEM - Tuesdays

- January Date(s): 1/9, 1/16, 1/23, 1/30
- Sponsors - Ms. Obrero/Ms. Harrell

Medical Detectives Club - Tuesdays

- January Date(s): 1/23, 1/30
- Sponsor - Nurse Mager

Girls Above Society - Wednesdays

- January Date(s): 1/3
- Sponsor - Ms. Patterson

Puzzle Club - Wednesdays

- January Date(s): 1/24, 1/31
- Sponsor - Ms. Kirkpatrick

Choir - Thursdays

- January Date(s): 1/25
- Sponsor - Ms. Garnes

Rhythm & Step - Fridays

- January Date(s): 1/26
- Sponsor - Ms. Garnes/Mr. Jones

New Afterschool Club for Spring



MC NEILL MEDICAL DETECTIVES

The Mc Neill Medical Detectives is a group of like-minded 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students learning about the human body. We will go through 12 weeks of exploring the different systems that work together to make a beautiful machine- the human body. We will also be covering germs, hand-washing techniques and nutrition. We will learn together by videos, demonstrations, models and crafts.

GUIDELINES & MEETING DATES

- Mc Neill Medical Detectives will meet on the dates listed below from dismissal to 4:00 PM
- Children must be picked up, by their authorized person, in front of the school by 4:00PM on meeting days
- After 2 late pick ups, the child will no longer be able to participate in the group.
- A child may be removed from the club if his/her conduct at school or in the club is unbecoming.

MEETING DATES

January	23rd,30th
February	6th,13th,20th,27th
March	5th,19th, 26th
April	2nd,9th,16th

PLEASE SCAN THE BARCODE BELOW TO SIGN-UP. ONLY THE FIRST 25 STUDENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.



Mc Neill Medical Detectives Permission Slip.pdf

[Download](#)

PTO News

MCNEILL ELEMENTARY

PTO MEETING

Join us Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024
at 6:30 pm in the Library.

FIRST meeting of the new year.
We will be discussing the
goals for the remainder of
the school year.



Join PTO today

January Dress Down Days

Our December dress down days will be held on the following date(s):

Friday, January 19 - Pajama Day (Students Pay \$1)



PTO Pajama Dress Down Day

Friday, January 19th, 2024

Bring \$1 to your teacher &
wear your favorite pajamas

*All clothing must meet LCISD Student Dress Code Policy.

January Spirit Nights

Our January Spirit Nights will be held on the following dates:

January 11 - Chicken Salad Chick

Support McNeill Elementary School with Chicken Salad Chick. It's time for a Spirit Night on Wheels!

Parents, teachers, staff, family, and friends - order your choice of 1 pound tubs of chicken salad, egg salad, pimento cheese, large sides like broccoli salad, pasta salad, grape salad, mac 'n cheese, fresh fruit as well as croissants and treats with the order form link provided. Chicken Salad Chick will call to collect payment. 20% of sales will be donated to McNeill Elementary.

Pick up your order THURSDAY, 1/11/2024, from 5:45-6 pm in the McNeill Elementary front parking lot. Questions? Email nicolesanders.csc@gmail.com



Spirit Night on Wheels

January 11th

McNeill Elementary School

Pick up from 5:45-6 pm

Choose from 13 different flavors of chicken salad, egg salad, pimento cheese, tasty sides, croissants, and cookies. Pre-orders only. For more information and to order, click on the link provided.



**20% of sales will be donated to
McNeill Elementary PTO**



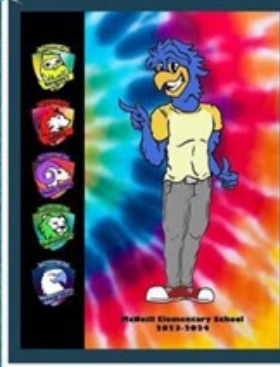
[**CLICK HERE TO ORDER TODAY**](#)

Deadline to order: Wednesday, 1/10, at 10 am

[**Yearbook Information**](#)

Yearbook News

Jan/Feb 2024



**Presenting our
2023-2024 Yearbook Cover!**

Yearbooks are selling fast!
Less than 60 copies remain!
Order yours today before they sell out! **\$35**

Three Easy Ways to Order

1. Order Online at www.balfour.com
2. Make a payment using VENMO to @McNeill-PTO
3. Send cash or check to the front office, checks made payable to: McNeill Elementary PTO

**McNeill Elementary School
2023-2024**

SCAN ME

Life is too short to wait!

Share your photos with us!
We love featuring our
Merlin loving fans!

Two Easy Ways to Share

Upload directly to our website at www.balfour.com
or email your photos to Delores.Williams@merlinyearbook@gmail.com

The link has to contain photos in March & 2024

Memory Messages

Due to popular demand,
memory messages
are now sold out!



Contact Delores Williams at merlinyearbook@gmail.com
for all your yearbook questions or concerns.

YEARBOOKS SELLING FAST!!

Order your 2023-2024
Yearbook now for just \$35!

Three easy ways to order:

1. Go to Balfour.com and type in our school name **McNeill Elementary School**. Purchase a yearbook online using a credit or debit card.
2. Make a payment using Venmo to McNeill Elementary PTO @**McNeill-PTO**
3. Complete the form below and return to front office with your cash or check attached. Make checks payable to: **McNeill Elementary PTO**

For questions or concerns, please email
Delores Williams at merlinyearbook@gmail.com

While supplies last. Scan now to preorder.



Cost: **\$35**

Student Name : _____

Teacher/Grade : _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone : _____

of Yearbooks _____ Total Cost _____

Payment Method _____ Cash _____ Check _____ Venmo
(check one)

Join the PTO

McNeill PTO Membership Sign-up

JOIN McNeill Elementary PTO TODAY!!

McNeill Elementary PTO is a vital part of the school community bringing together parents, teachers, administrators, and students. We provide an excellent opportunity for parents to meet one another, get comfortable with the school and its staff, and support each other's common goals. Plus, we have a lot of fun in the process!

MEMBERSHIP IS ONLY \$10!!

Each year our PTO funds social events, tools for education, student programs, school supplies, etc. We also provide much needed extras to enhance our student's overall school experience. The PTO can only accomplish all of these things with your help, so please join us today and become involved.

If you would like to make a donation to the PTO we welcome your support. If you are making a donation, please make checks payable to "McNeill Elementary PTO". All donations are tax deductible.

Repeated Information

Volunteer Information

If you are interested in volunteering in Lamar CISD for the 2023-2024 please complete the volunteer background check application found here <https://www.lcisd.org/community/volunteers> This background check will allow you to serve on campus in a variety of capacities with both students and teachers.

We appreciate your help in keeping our campus and students safe. Thank you for volunteering in Lamar CISD!

Lunch Visitors

Please see the reminders below regarding our lunch visitors and procedures.

Lunch visitors will be welcomed daily during. Lunchroom visitors are limited to **TWO visitors** per child per day.

As a large campus, our space is very limited, and we must be creative with how we safely accommodate lunch visitors for parents who would like to eat with their children. There will be one lunch table and the lounge area designated for visitors. Please be sure to sit in these areas only.

Visitors may eat **ONLY** with their child. Visitors may not provide food for children who are not their own or interact with them.

Visitors must sign in at the front office with a government issued identification card or a passport to receive a pass. After the scheduled lunch time, parents must leave the building.

Parents are highly discouraged from dropping off lunches or having lunch delivery services at school. The constant deliveries are a disruption to the instructional environment. Students should bring easy to open items with them daily for lunch and snacks to minimize contact. No nut-based snacks for the classrooms.

McNeill Lunch Schedule (1).pdf

[Download](#)

151.7 KB

Lamar CISD Elementary Handbook / District Code of Conduct

The Lamar CISD Elementary Handbook has been approved by the LCISD board and is now posted with updated changes. Please follow this link to review:

<https://www.lcisd.org/departments/academics/elementary-education>

HIGHLIGHTS

Technology Devices

Personal Technology Lamar CISD believes that appropriate use of students' technology devices enhances our students' education. Students may be asked to bring their own device to school. This includes but is not limited to: cell phones, smart phones, iPods, iPads, electronic tablets, and laptop computers. Students may use devices in class at the teacher's discretion. Students must follow teacher, campus, and district rules and guidelines for use.

(Campus Guideline: All electronic devices must remain in the student's backpack turned off during the instructional day unless the teacher allows the student to use the device for an assignment.)

Vapes / e-cigarettes

During the last Texas Legislative session, a law was passed making it illegal for a student to be in possession of a vape / e-cigarette at school events or on campus. If a student is found in possession of such items violating the district code of conduct, there is a mandatory placement at ALC. (Page 113 Elementary Student Handbook)

Possession Of Prohibited Items Students shall not possess or use:

(For a complete list of prohibited items see page 99 of the LCISD Elementary Handbook)

- fireworks of any kind, smoke or stink bombs, or any other pyrotechnic device
- razor, box cutter, chain, or any other object used in a way that threatens or inflicts bodily injury to another person
- "look-alike" weapon
- air gun or BB gun, firearm, stun gun
- a pocketknife or any other small knife
- mace or pepper spray

(Parents, please discuss this with your child and check your student's backpacks or pockets every periodically. Students have shared that on the weekends they go fishing or hunting where they use a pocket knife. We simply do not want a pocket knife left in a pocket or back pack from a fun weekend trip inadvertently. If you look on page 113, there's mandatory placement to ALC if these items are brought on campus.)

Compulsory Attendance Law

Excused Absences for Compulsory Attendance

State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. The District shall excuse a student from attending school for the following purposes:

- Religious holy days
- Required court appearances
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship
- Health-Care Appointments*
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state

- TAPS at Military Funeral
- Parent, Stepparent, or Legal Guardian who is an active-duty member of the uniformed services leaves for active duty
- Personal Illness**
- Death/Funeral of an Immediate Family Member
- Quarantine Absences for a student who is required to quarantine will be excused with written documentation from a medical physician or the school nurse.

*Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences related to autism services shall be excused, if the student returns to school on the same day of the appointment and brings a note from the health-care provider. A consultation over the phone or via video (telemedicine) is considered an appointment with a health care professional. However, an appointment with a school nurse does not count as an appointment with a health care professional.

**When a student is absent from school due to personal illness, the student upon return, or within 5 days of returning to school, must submit a note signed by a parent giving the date(s) and describing the reason for the absence.

Unexcused Absences

If an absence does not meet the criteria for an excused absence, the absence will be considered unexcused for attendance accounting purposes. Examples of unexcused absences includes, but are not limited to the following:

- Any absence without required documentation.
- **Family trips/vacations, reunions, weddings, parent business trips.**
- **Non-school sponsored activities.**
- Private lesson or tutoring.
- Religious retreats, camps, mission trips, and individual rites other than a religious holy day.
- Non-enrollment days – These are days that a student is not in school due to transferring to another LCISD campus or alternative placement.

ABSENT NOTES:

Parent notes may be sent by email but must come from a parent's verified email account. The note or email must be sent to the campus attendance clerk. Excuse notes turned in after 5 days are subject to approval by the campus principal. An excessive number of absences will be referred to the Campus Attendance Review Committee (ARC). If a student is absent 5 consecutive school days or more, a doctor's note is required within 5 days of the student's return to school for the absence to be excused.

MAKE-UP WORK:

It is critical for students to work with teachers when they return from an absent from school so that assignments can be completed.

Parent Standards of Conduct

The LCISD Board of Trustees approved the Parent Standards of Conduct on August 1, 2023.

Parent Standards of Conduct - 08.01.23.pdf

[Download](#)

147.2 KB

Parent Standards of Conduct - Spanish - 08.01.23.pdf

[Download](#)

145.5 KB



2023-24 McNeill's Standard Dress Code

Parents,

Please help to ensure that your child is in dress code everyday. Outside of dress down days, students are expected to adhere to our campus dress code. Thank you in advance for your help.

Collared (polo style, no logo) solid color tops in red, white, navy blue and yellow. Bottoms may be in solid color khaki, navy blue or blue denim jeans, slacks shorts, skirts, or jumpers. McNeill spirit shirts may also be worn.

Clarifications:

- Students are required to wear their ID's daily.
- On PTO Free and Pay dress down days students must follow the LCISD dress code policy.

Car Rider Pick-Up Procedures

To ensure the safety of our students, we ask that you please follow the procedures listed below to help the car rider line remain safe and move quickly.

1. The car rider line is a **CELL PHONE FREE ZONE**.
2. **Dismissal will begin promptly at 3:10.**
3. Parents will hang their car rider signs on the rearview mirror.
4. A teacher will assign you a number as you enter the car rider line.
5. You will pull forward to your designated number indicated on the sidewalk to your right.
6. Do not stop when you see your child walking. A Safety Patrol student or teacher will assist your child with entering the car.
7. **Please do not get out of your vehicle for any reason.**
8. Once your child is in your vehicle, you must remain in the car rider line. **Do not go around the cars in front of you to exit the car line.**
9. **If your child is not at the designated number provided, you will be asked to move forward and park in a designated parking spot. A staff member will go to the gym and walk your child to your vehicle.**
10. Please be patient and drive slowly.



On inclement weather days, we will implement our Rainy Day Dismissal procedures to ensure all students get home safely. All dismissal procedures will remain the same for car riders, bus riders, daycare, and YMCA students. Please note the changes below for walkers and bikers in the event of a Rainy Day Dismissal.

Walkers & Bikers

- Students will report to the library and sit by grade level.
- After the bus and day car buses have departed, parents of walkers/bikers may make their way to the front of the school.
- Parents will be asked to sign their child out with one of the staff members in the front foyers.
- Students will be released from the library to the parent after they have been signed out.

In the event you would like to change your child's transportation method, please contact the front office before 2:15 pm. Thank you in advance for your understanding as student safety is our top priority.

Early Pick-Up and Transportation Changes

If you take your child out of school before dismissal time, you will need to report to the office to sign him/her out. Your child will stay in the classroom until you arrive. If it necessary for someone other than the parent/guardian pick up your child, that person must be signed, dated note with the child. The person picking up your child must show photo identification to the office staff. Accumulated time of early pick-ups is calculated by minutes in lost instruction time. Request to check out your child must be done prior to 2:15 pm.

Any changes in the normal transportation of your child must be stated in writing with a parent/guardian signature. We ask for everyone's help in not making changes frequently. However, we understand that in rare cases, unexpected changes will need to happen. These can be called in to the front office by 2:15 pm. **We are not able to process changes after 2:15 pm.** This includes parents that come to the campus without prior notice to pick up their child. Any change in transportation arrangements for any student requires a note to the teacher. Make sure you write your child's first and last name, teacher's name and indicate the date(s) for the change and how the child is going to go home. We ask that the parents not email the change since there maybe times that a teacher is not in attendance or does not have a chance to read their email.

Please note on early release days the latest you can pick up is 11:00 am!

Visitor / Volunteer Badges

Parents and other visitors / volunteers are welcome to visit district schools. For the safety of those within the school and to avoid disruption of instructional time, all visitors / volunteers must first report to the main office, sign in as a visitor / volunteer, present a valid State issued ID, and wear a visitor's / volunteer's badge. To better protect our students, visitors and staff, all LCISD

campuses screen for registered sex offenders. A valid State issued ID is required to enter all campuses.

(New Requirement: Badges must be worn on the upper torso / chest area in clear view)



SMART Tag Reminders

- Students will be required to wear their SMART Tags daily. They should wear them with their lanyards to school. No items should be attached to lanyards.
- All students will start receive SMART tags by the end of the first week.
- Any student who misplaces their SMART Tag will need to purchase a replacement one. Replacement SMART Tags can be purchased for \$5 in the front office

SRP: Standard Response Protocol

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION



HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.

STUDENTS

Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Close and lock door
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.

STUDENTS

Return to inside of building
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Bring everyone indoors
Lock outside doors
Increase situational awareness
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.

STUDENTS

Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door

ADULTS

Recover students from hallway if possible
Lock the classroom door
Turn out the lights
Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door
Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE! (A location may be specified)

STUDENTS

Leave stuff behind if required to
If possible, bring your phone
Follow instructions

ADULTS

Lead students to Evacuation location
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults



SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.

STUDENTS

Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard

ADULTS

Lead safety strategy
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults

Hazard	Safety Strategy
Tornado	Evacuate to shelter area
Hazmat	Seal the room
Earthquake	Drop, cover and hold
Tsunami	Get to high ground

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Emergency Drill Practices

Every month Mcneill students will practice a safety drill along with a fire drill. Drills are not announced so we can practice them in case we are presented with a situation to activate one in real time. Teachers reviewed the procedures for these drills with their students during the first week of school. These drills have not changed from last year to this year.

HELPFUL DOCUMENTS

2023-23 LAMAR CISD CALENDAR

2023-24-instructional (1).pdf

[Download](#)

148.7 KB


Dates to Remember

JANUARY

- January 3: 3rd Nine Weeks Begin/Girls Above Society
- January 5: 2nd Nine Weeks Report Cards Posted
- January 8: Gr. 3-5 MAP Testing (Reading)
- January 9: Gr. 2-5 MAP Testing (Math)/Girls in STEM/PTO Meeting @ 6:30 PM (Library)
- January 10: Gr. 2-5 MAP Testing (Science)
- January 11: Gr. 1-2 MAP Testing (Reading)/PTO Spirit Night (Chicken Salad Chick) Delivery at 5:45 PM
- January 12: Gr. 1 MAP Testing (Math)/5th Grade Fieldtrip
- January 15: MLK Day (NO SCHOOL)
- January 16: Girls in STEM
- January 19: PTO Dress Down Day - Pajama Day (Students Pay \$1)/Rhythm & Step Club
- January 22: PTO Fundraiser Begins (Fun Run)/Checkers Club
- January 23: Medical Detectives Club/ Girls in STEM
- January 24: Puzzles Club
- January 25: International Festival @ 5:30 PM/Choir Practice
- January 26: 5th Grade Fieldtrip/Rhythm & Step Club
- January 29: Checkers Club
- January 30: Medical Detectives Club/ Girls in STEM
- January 31: 100th Day of School/Puzzle Club



JANUARY 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY WINTER BREAK - NO SCHOOL	2	3 3RD 9 WEEKS BEGINS GIRLS ABOVE SOCIETY 3:15-4PM	4	5 REPORT CARDS POSTED IN SKYWARD SPIRIT WEAR	6 SAM RAYBURN DAY
7 LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY 1/9/23	8 MAP TESTING (GR. 3-5 READING) NEHS MEETING 3:15-4PM	9 MAP TESTING (GR. 2-5 MATH) PTO MEETING @ 6:30 PM LIBRARY GIRLS IN STEM (3:45-4:45PM)	10 MAP TESTING (GR. 2-5 SCIENCE)	11 MAP TESTING (GR. 1-2 READING) PTO SPIRIT NIGHT (CHICKEN SALAD CHICK) DELIVERY @ 5:45PM MCNEILL PARKING LOT	12 SPIRIT WEAR MAP TESTING (GR. 1 MATH) <i>field trip</i> 5TH GRADE FIELDTRIP (AAP-STEAM 12-1:30 PM)	13
14	15  MLK DAY NO SCHOOL (STUDENTS)	16 GIRLS IN STEM (3:45-4:45PM)	17	18	19 P.T.O. DRESS DOWN DAY WEAR PAJAMAS - STUDENTS PAY \$1 RHYTHM & STEP (3:15-4:15PM)	20
21 TEXAS HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE WEEK 1/22-1/26	22 CHECKERS CLUB (3:15-4:15PM)	23 PTO FUNDRAISER KICKOFF APEX GIRLS IN STEM (3:45-4:45PM) MEDICAL DETECTIVES (3:10-4PM)	24 PUZZLE CLUB (3:15-4:15PM)	25 INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL 5:30-7:30 PM	26 SPIRIT WEAR <i>field trip</i> 5TH GRADE FIELDTRIP (AAP-STEAM 12-1:30 PM) RHYTHM & STEP (3:15-4:15PM)	27
28	29 CHECKERS CLUB (3:15-4:15PM)	30 GIRLS IN STEM (3:45-4:45PM) MEDICAL DETECTIVES (3:10-4PM)	31 100 100TH DAY OF SCHOOL PUZZLE CLUB (3:15-4:15PM)			

McNeill Elementary

Email: jeanine.jordan@lcisd.org

Website: <https://www.lcisd.org/campuses/mcneill/home>

Location: 7300 S. Mason Rd., Richmond, TX 77407

Phone: (832) 223-2800

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/McNeillMerlins>



McNeill Elementary