



## **Parents' Guide**

**2022-2023**

# Parents' Guide

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. What an exciting time! Your child is beginning REAL school for the first time! We are looking forward to an exciting and enriching school year for everyone. As you know, we are your child's biggest fan, and we are anxious to begin this year's journey.

## Office Hours

7:20 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

## School Hours

Breakfast 7:30-8:00 a.m. (in the classrooms)

School Day 7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

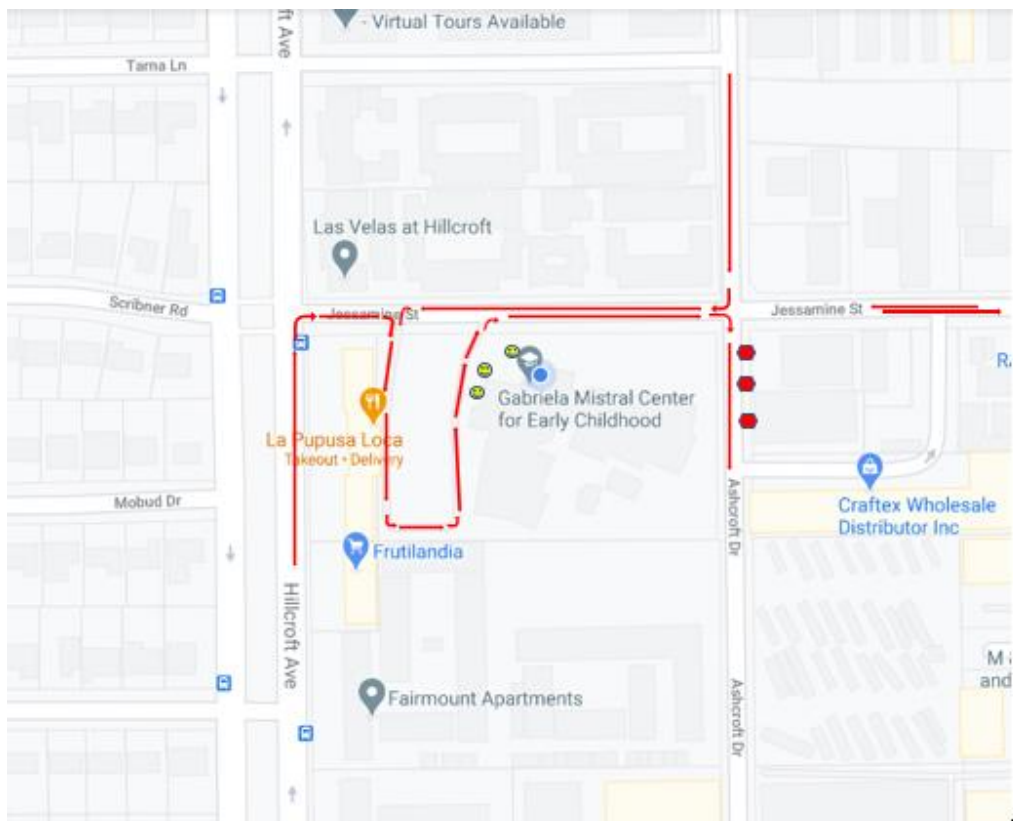
\*Late passes are given beginning at 7:45 a.m.

AT GABRIELA MISTRAL WE WELCOME PARENTS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND VISITORS. HOWEVER, ANY VISITOR ENTERING THE BUILDING MUST SIGN IN AT THE OFFICE.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

### Morning Arrival

School staff will be available to supervise students in the hallways beginning at 7:10 a.m. The bell will ring at 7:30 for students to enter the classrooms. Parent conferences will not be taking place during student's drop-off or pick-up time. If you need to talk to your child's teacher, please schedule a conference with the teacher during her planning time or after school. The receptionist will be happy to provide you with paper and a pencil to leave a note for the teach



6203 Jessamine St. Houston, TX 77081 Phone: (713) 773-6253

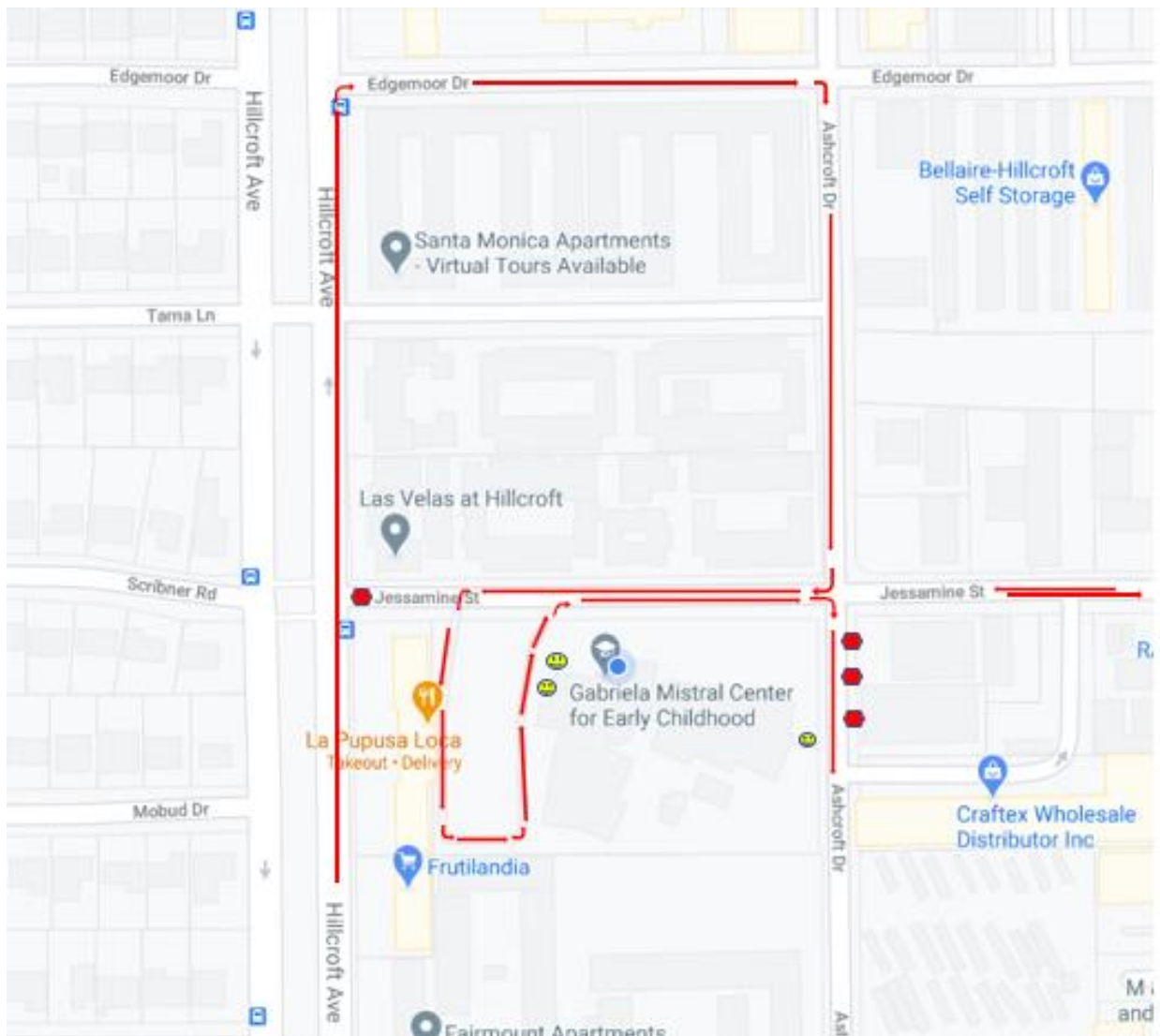
## Dismissal

**All children must be picked up by 3:10 p.m.**

Children picked up by car will be sitting in the cafeteria. Parents will pull into the U-shaped drive, and school staff escort children to their vehicle. Children who are walking home with their families will sit in the long hallway. Parents will walk up to the gate on Ashcroft, and a school employee will bring the child to the parent. At the beginning of the year, each area is **SLOW** as we all get used to the routine.

Once you pick a mode of transportation, do not change. The dismissal procedure may be frustrating in the beginning, but we ask you to go to your original choice since the process will get faster. However, should you need to change your child's mode of transportation, you must notify the front office in writing by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the change.

An adult must pick up all children **with a Mistral transportation tag. There are no exceptions.** Should you arrive without a tag, a school member will direct you to the office. The office staff will check your identification to verify that you have permission to pick up the child and issue you a temporary tag for the day. You will then need to return to the car line or walker line to pick up the student.



For dismissal we have **NO ENTRY FROM HILLCROFT ST.** and you **CAN NOT TURN LEFT to HILLCROFT ST.**

## ATTENDANCE

### Attendance/Absences

Parents are responsible for ensuring consistent attendance in school and modeling the importance of punctuality as this will begin the pattern your child will experience throughout their educational career. We expect 100% daily attendance at Gabriela Mistral. Missing multiple days and chronic tardiness harm your child's ability to learn at the pace matching their peers. In HISD schools, a student may have no more than ten unexcused absences during the school year (five per semester). Exceeding this number of absences will result in administrative intervention.

A dated written excuse and/or note from a medical professional must be sent to the teacher for each day a child is absent within three days after the student returns from an absence. Excuse notes are available in the front office. If a child is ill for more than one day, please notify the school by 8:00 a.m. of the nature of the illness and when the child will return to school. If a student misses three or more consecutive days, a **doctor's note is required.**

In extreme cases of chronic absences, the principal or a school administrator will schedule a parent conference and/or make a home visit. Be aware that excessive unexcused absences may result in your child being placed on an attendance contract. In addition, failure to comply with school guidelines regarding attendance can result in your child's withdrawal from our pre-kindergarten program. Please request a conference with our school support team to discuss any concerns you may have about attendance.

Attendance is taken at 9:30 a.m. every day.

### Tardiness

Students are counted tardy after 7:45 a.m. excessive tardiness will result in a parent conference with the principal or another school administrator and a lack of success in your child's educational career.

### Students Leaving Early

A student may be released during school hours only to the person who signed the student's enrollment/transportation card or who has legal custody of the student or to a person who has the parent's written permission to have the student released. That person must first present identification to the school office. No student will be allowed to walk home alone. When possible, all medical and dental appointments should be made after classroom hours. **No child will be released after 2:00 p.m. If you need to pick up your child early, you must come before 2:00 p.m.** This policy prevents teachers from having multiple interruptions to their instruction at the end of the school day.

### Awards

Students earn incentives for Perfect Attendance throughout the year. Special prizes will be distributed every week. In addition, students with perfect attendance for the year will receive a Perfect Attendance medallion.

# BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

## Breakfast and Lunch

Meals are available to qualifying students at no cost or a substantially reduced rate. Applications for the federal free and reduced meals program will be available in the front office. You will receive a letter at your home once your application has been processed. You may also check with our cafeteria staff.

Because the meal status of our students affects our school's funding, we ask all parents to fill out the application regardless of income status. If you have any questions, please contact the front office.

**Breakfast:** *Breakfast will be served in the classrooms at 7:30 a.m.*

**Lunch:** First lunch begins at 10:30 a.m., and the last lunch begins at 12:25 p.m. Each lunch period is 30 minutes – the teacher will provide a daily schedule to parents during Open House.

## HISD Cafeteria Guidelines

- **Due to highly contagious germs, food cannot be shared (parents and siblings may not eat off of each other's plates).**
- No snacks, cakes, pizza, etc., can be provided to other students during lunch hours. You can feed your child only.
- **Food may not be taken out of the cafeteria.**



### Cafeteria Rules

The same general rules for behavior apply in the cafeteria as in the classroom. Students are to remain quiet in line and keep their hands to themselves. Classes will sit together at their assigned tables. Students are allowed to talk quietly and may leave their table only when excused.

Excellent lunchroom manners will occur as students follow the following cafeteria rules:

- Walk quietly at all times when entering and leaving the cafeteria.
  - Maintain a low and pleasant voice level while talking.
  - Classes should leave tables, seats, and floors clear of paper and debris.
  - Remain seated until dismissed.
  - Empty trays and trash one time only, in a quiet and orderly manner. After emptying trash and taking trays, walk to line up. Those who have no trash or trays may go directly to line up.
  - Raise your hand if you need assistance.
- Restroom breaks

# COMMUNICATION

## Communication

Every teacher will send home a parent communication folder daily. In addition, each teacher has a conference and planning period. You are always invited to arrange an appointment with your teacher during their conference period or a time that is mutually agreed upon.

A newsletter is sent home monthly. Teachers will be using different apps to communicate with parents. They will let you know which apps and how to subscribe or access the app. Reminders for holidays and special events are sent home at least one week in advance. If you need to speak with the school principal, it is best to schedule an appointment.

There are many ways in which we try to communicate with parents. We recognize that we live in a communication-rich world. Here are some of the ways you may receive important information:

School to parent	Teacher to parent
School marquee, website, & social media	Face to face communication (with appointment)
Flyers/ Newsletters	Written notes
School call-out system	Phone calls
	Apps
	email

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

We invite parents to meet with their child's teacher throughout the year. Ideally, information about a child's physical, psychological, emotional, social, and academic growth would flow from school to home and from home to school so that we might support each child appropriately. Parents should contact the school whenever the need arises. Teachers may be contacted by leaving a note in the front office. If you call during the school day, the office staff will relay the message to the teacher. **Under no circumstances will phone calls be sent directly to the classroom during instructional time.**

Conferences are scheduled at periods when the teacher is not with her children. Appointments may be made during a teacher's non-instructional/conference time. Contact the teacher for an appointment at 713 -773-6253. If you have called or left a note for your child's teacher, the teacher will contact you regarding your request within 24 hours.

# EMERGENCY INFORMATION / ENROLLMENT FORMS

## Emergency Information / Enrollment Forms

We work hard to avoid emergencies. In the case of one, we want to contact you as soon as possible. You will provide us with contact information at the time of registration. **If your address, telephone, name, or other information changes, please notify the office as soon as possible. We must have an emergency phone number.** Enrollment forms without a phone number will not be accepted.

All parents must complete a transportation form that shows who can pick up their child from school. In addition, a picture ID will be required from all persons checking out students. **We will make no exceptions.**

# DISCIPLINE

## Student Conduct

At Gabriela Mistral, we are committed to academic success for every student. Therefore, we expect each student to respect staff members, volunteers, and other students at all times. Every student will conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the school's function as an educational facility. Students who disrupt the school's operation, interfere with the rights of others, or damage school or personal property will be held accountable for their behavior.

All students and parents will have access online access to the Code of Student Conduct. If you need a printed copy, you may request one in the front office. The Code of Conduct describes disciplinary offenses and how the school district addresses them. HISD maintains a "zero tolerance" policy for student behaviors that disrupt instruction or pose safety hazards on HISD property and at school-related events. Students not adhering to school-wide expectations or the HISD Students Rights and Responsibilities will be subject to the following process:

## Classroom Intervention

Teachers will use various verbal and non-verbal techniques as they work with students to refocus the student and/or prevent discipline issues.

Teachers will:

1. Provide rules/guidelines for behavior
2. Give attention to positive behaviors
3. Maintain high expectations for each child
4. Follow Mistral school wide commitments
  - I will use my listening ears
  - I will use soft touches
  - I will use kind words
  - I will use walking feet

Each teacher will have systems in place for classroom management. These systems may include a parental/family report and/or a behavior contract at the teacher's discretion. In addition, teachers will refer students that consistently struggle with inappropriate classroom behaviors to the counselor and to the Intervention Assistant Team (IAT) .

## Administrative Intervention

Students who exhibit serious or habitual violations of school-wide expectations or the HISD Students Rights and Responsibilities will be referred to an administrator through the use of an office referral. The administrator will follow the procedures defined in the HISD Students Rights and Responsibilities which may result in student conferences, parent conferences, classroom removal, suspension, or other appropriate consequences, including expulsion if necessary

## Schoolwide Commitments

Mistral schoolwide commitments

- I will use my listening ears
- I will use soft touches
- I will use kind words
- I will use walking feet

## School Rules

- Students will be expected to respond positively to directions from all staff members and volunteers.
- Students will be required to respect the personal property and rights of their classmates and others.
- Profanity or vulgar expressions of any kind will not be accepted.
- Students will be expected to refrain from rough or aggressive play, which may injure themselves or others.
- Bullying, intimidating, fighting, or provoking a fight is forbidden.
- Students will be required to walk in a quiet and orderly manner.
- Students are not allowed to bring any personal items such as toys, electronics, jewelry, etc.

Parents will be contacted about disruptive or inappropriate behaviors.

**Parents are required to partner with the school to ensure their children adhere to the rules and conventions of proper behaviors while at school.**

## UNIFORM / DRESS CODE

### Dress Code

We do not require school uniforms. However, we do enforce a dress code. Students are to wear comfortable, clean articles of clothing. Shoes need to be appropriate for recess on the playground.

#### We do not allow the following:

- Open toe shoes
- High heel shoes
- Temporary tattoos
- Dyed or colored hair
- Short dresses, spaghetti straps, short skirts, or shorts.

## REPORT CARDS

### Report Cards

The Prekindergarten Progression of Skills Report is the Report Card for Prekindergarten. The student report card is an official part of the student academic transcript. Every six weeks, it is sent home. This report provides information regarding student academic and social skills. We encourage you to set up a meeting with your teacher to review these reports and any time you may be concerned about your child's social and/or academic progress. Report cards will go out on the following dates:

- October 8, 2022,
- November 18, 2022,
- January 9, 2023,
- March 3, 2023,
- April 20, 2023, and
- May 31, 2023.



# HOMEWORK

## Homework

All academic skills are introduced and practiced in class. Each teacher will send home a monthly homework calendar. These activities engage parental participation and daily conversation with your child. In addition to these activities, we expect parents to read with their child for at least 20 minutes every evening. Research proves that a parent reading to their child is the biggest success indicator in the academic life of a child.

# CELEBRATIONS

## Celebrations

In HISD, two parties per year are permitted for each class. These are our Winter Holiday celebration and End of the Year parties. Room parents and their helpers may assist or take charge of these two functions for the classroom teacher. Each teacher will work alongside their parents to plan these events. **No unscheduled parties are permitted.** We do not allow sweets of any kind for birthday celebrations. Parents are to make prior arrangements with the teacher should they want to bring treat bags with non-food items (erasers, stickers, etc.).

# MEDICAL CARE

## Medical Care at School

**The school nurse will contact parents or a designated relative or family friend if a student becomes ill or suffers an injury. The importance of listing and always updating all emergency telephone numbers on your child's enrollment card cannot be emphasized enough.**

## Immunizations

To protect every child and school personnel from contagious diseases, Houston ISD complies with state laws on vaccinations. The children that do not have the required immunizations must be excluded by law. To enroll your child you must provide a record of your child's current immunizations signed by a doctor. Your child will be eligible to enroll provisionally if the required immunization process has begun.

## Medication

Prescription medication can be administered at school only when advance written parental and physician permission (on the approved HISD form) is on file. Only the nurse or personnel designated by the principal may administer prescribed medication to a student during the school day. We have attached the necessary forms to the end of the parent handbook for your convenience.

## Illness

In general, students with fever, vomiting, or rashes may not come to school until well or a doctor's permit states they are no longer infectious. Children who have been ill with a fever are not allowed to return to school until they have been fever-free (without medication) for at least 24 hours.

Wounds are to be covered at all times at school. Hair nits and lice are also communicable, and all students must be COMPLETELY free of both before the student can be permitted back in the classroom. These nits and lice should be completely removed as soon as the referral letter is received in order to avoid school absences. The teacher will require an office permit to return to class. The student will be given this permit when his hair is COMPLETELY free of both nits and lice after the staff's re-check.

# PARENT INVOLVEMENT

## Parent Involvement

There are many opportunities for parent participation at Mistral Center for Early Childhood. Parents are encouraged to attend our parent meetings and workshops, serve on our SDMC (Shared Decision Making Committee), or become a VIPS (Volunteer in Public Schools).

Mistral Center for Early Childhood is governed by a board composed of the Principal, teachers, non-instructional personnel, community members, and parents. This committee, called the Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC), is the ruling body of the school. Every year, there are two spaces on the SDMC reserved for parents of Mistral students. Parents may also address the SDMC to resolve concerns pertaining to Gabriela Mistral. SDMC Agenda Input Forms are available in the office.

Parents and participating family members must be registered as volunteers using the VIPS registration form when consistently serving our school. Forms and support in registration are available at all times. Please make an appointment and follow district safety guidelines.

We are happy to form strong bonds with our families each year. However, these bonds must not be more important than the safety of each child. Teachers are responsible for the safety of their students, and volunteers must look to the teacher and staff for direction when serving in the school. Volunteer registration forms and background forms must be completed each school year.

# SAFETY AND SECURITY

## Campus Safety Plan

To ensure the safety of all students and staff members, the following procedures are in effect:

- Students may arrive at school from 7:10 a.m. to 7:30 a.m.
- Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. are considered late.
- All visitors, including parents, must report to the office to receive a pass via our Raptor® system. You will be asked for a picture ID such as a valid driver's license. Return your pass when leaving the building so that you may be logged out of our system.
- All students must be picked up promptly during dismissal.
- Cars should **not** be driven into the staff parking lot.
- Cars left unattended in the fire lane are subject to a \$250 fine and/or a parking ticket.
- Families walking students to and from school must exercise caution when crossing streets.
- Parking spaces in the Candlewick Apartments parking lot are intended for apartment residents only. Unauthorized vehicles may be towed.

# OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## After School Program

We will offer after-school care from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm on our campus. This care is called Extended Day. There is a fee for this program. Ms. Arias is the after-school program coordinator. You can reach her at 713 773-6263.

## Bathrooming Issues

Gabriela Mistral students **must** be toilet-trained. However, many students have never attended school, and they will have accidents while becoming accustomed to class routines. Therefore, please send a change of clothes that can be

kept in the classroom for your child. When your child has an accident, be mindful that you will need to renew the emergency set of clothes the teacher stores in her classroom. Whenever possible, teachers will help our students clean up and change clothes so that they do not have to leave the classroom. If a child does not have a change of clothes, we will attempt to provide a temporary set of clothes or contact the parents to bring a new set of clothes.

### **P.P. Policy**

As you know, our students will have bathroom accidents as they adjust to school routines and become comfortable in the school environment. Teachers follow these procedures when these accidents occur:

1. Let the student know that accidents happen, and everything is going to be okay. We never want our students to feel that they have done something wrong when they have an accident.
2. If the child has a change of clothing, assist them in cleaning up and getting changed. The best possible outcome for the student is to continue the day as if nothing has happened.
3. If the child does not have a change of clothing, they will be sent to the clinic. Office staff will try to find clothes that fit the child or contact the parents to bring the child clean clothes.
4. If the accident cannot be resolved with a clothes change, office staff may assist the child in rinsing off in the clinic shower and then changing. If any parent does not wish for the office staff to assist their child in the event of a bathroom accident, the parent must submit the request in writing at the beginning of the school year.

Accidents that continue to occur throughout the year are rare and indicate the need for additional support from outside resources. Once teachers have built a community and established routines, they focus on providing individualized education for each class member. Children who have ongoing issues surrounding bathroom will require a formal meeting with our support staff to create a plan for that child.

### **Lost and Found**

The lost, and found box is located in the cafeteria. Parents should check the box for any lost items. We keep all found items only for a reasonable amount of time, and then good homes will be found for the remaining unclaimed items. It is not unusual for children to forget jackets, toys, backpacks, and lunch kits. Labeling all items with your child's first and last names is helpful to their safe return when lost or left behind.