



Parents' Guide

2023-2024

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Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year. How exciting! 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 are anxious to begin this year's journey.

Office Hours

7:10 am to 3:30 pm.

School Hours

Breakfast 7:30–8:00 am (in the classrooms)

School Day 7:30 am – 3:00 pm.

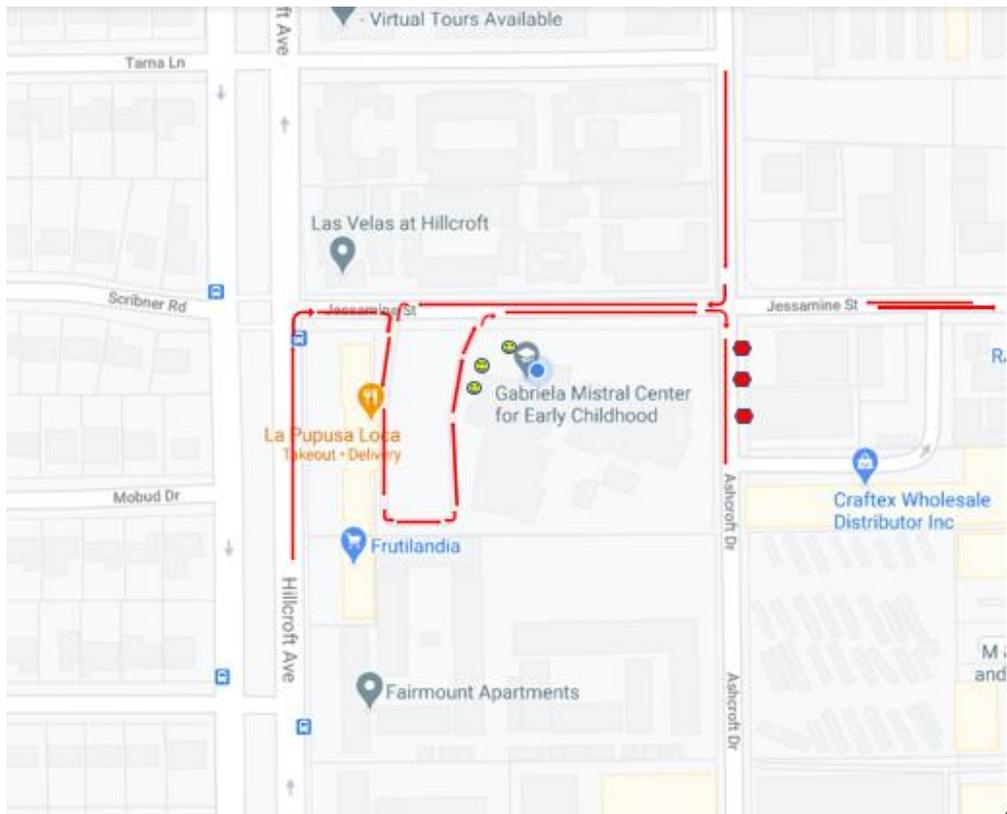
*Late passes are given beginning at 7:45 am.

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 at 7:10 am. The bell will ring at 7:30 for students to enter the classrooms. Parent conferences will not occur during student drop-off or pick-up time. If you need to talk to your child's teacher, please schedule a meeting 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 teacher.

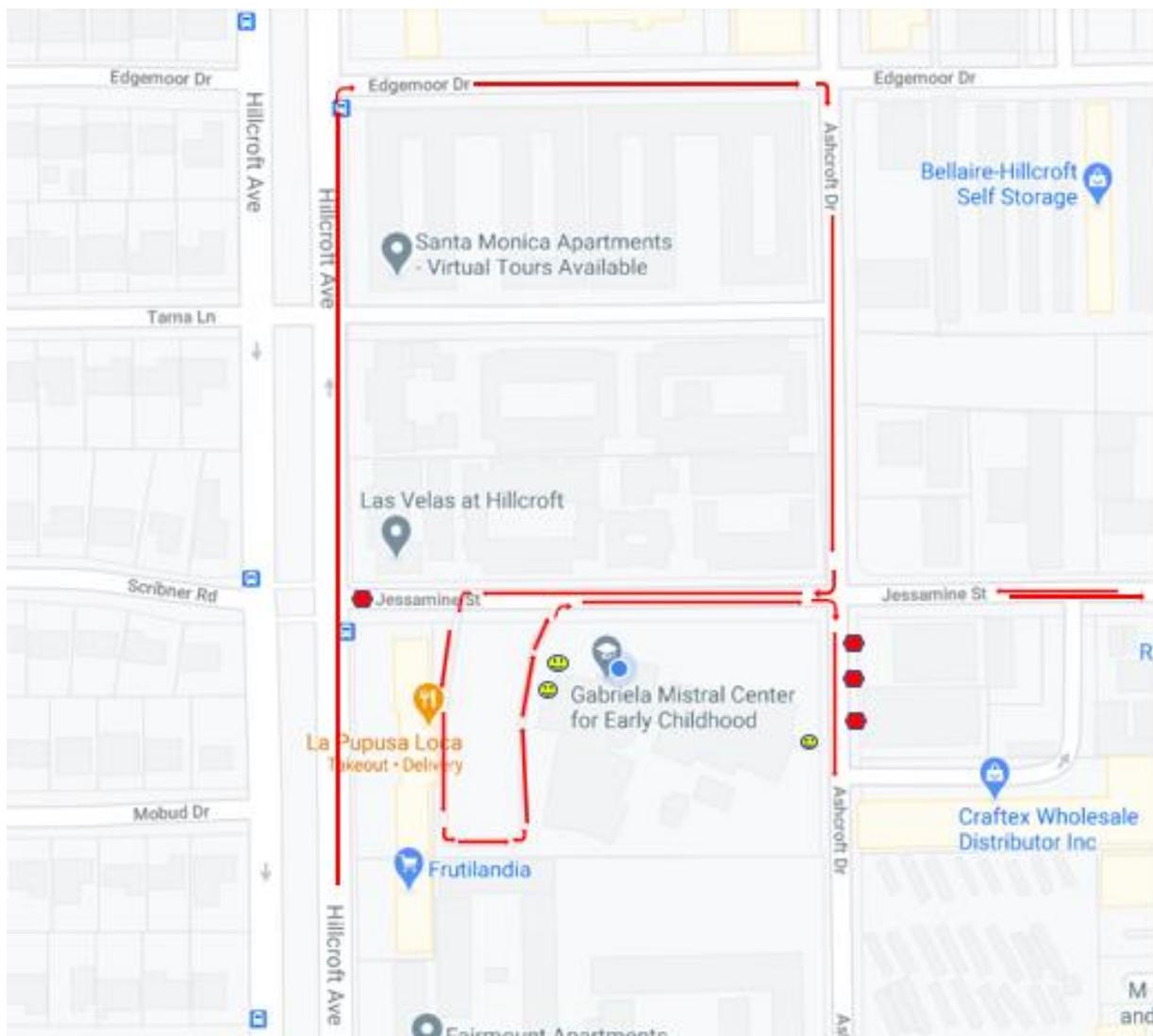


6203 Jessamine St. Houston, TX 77081 Phone: (713) 773-6253

Dismissal

All children must be picked up by 3:10 pm. Children picked up by car will be sitting in the cafeteria. Parents will pull into the U-shaped drive, and school staff will escort children to their vehicle. Children 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 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 am 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.** 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, students may have no more than ten unexcused absences during the school year (five per semester). Exceeding this number of absences will result in students failing the grade and will need administrative intervention.

A dated written excuse must be sent if the student is absent 1 or 2 days, and a note from a medical professional must be sent to the teacher if the child misses three or more days. The note must be sent to the school within three days after the student returns from an absence. Excuse notes are available in the front office for you to fill in. If a child is ill for more than one day, please notify the school by 8:00 am of the nature of the illness and when the child will return to school. A doctor's note is required if a student misses three or more consecutive days.

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 prekindergarten 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 am every day.

Tardiness

Students are counted as tardy after 7:45 am. 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 listed on the emergency contact list with proper identification matching the name on the contact list. 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 pm. If you need to pick up your child early, you must come before 2:00 pm.** 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 award.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND SNACKS

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks

Meals are served to every student on campus at no cost. Every parent must complete a socio-economic form will be available in the front office.

Breakfast: *Breakfast will be served in the classrooms from 7:30-8:00 am.*

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

Snacks: Teachers will send home a snack list for parents to assist with providing snacks. We **do not allow** children to eat unhealthy snacks at school, such as chips, candy, cake, cupcakes, etc.

HISD Cafeteria Guidelines

- **Due to highly contagious germs and some students' allergies, food cannot be shared (parents and siblings may not eat off each other's plates).**
- No snacks, cakes, cupcakes, pizza, etc., can be provided to other students during school hours.
- **Cafeteria 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 can 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.
- No 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 mutually agreed upon time.

Teachers will be using different apps to communicate with parents. They will let you know which apps you use and how to subscribe to or access them. Reminders for holidays and special events are sent home at least two or three days in advance. If you need to speak with the school principal, you must 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
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 their 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 immediately. We must have an emergency phone number.** Enrollment forms without a phone number will not be accepted.

All parents must complete an emergency contact form that shows who can pick up their child from school. In addition, a picture I.D. 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 always to respect staff members, volunteers, and other students. 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 to the Code of Student Conduct online. You may request a printed copy in the front office if needed. 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 Student's 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 and teach Conscious Discipline Components.

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 Intervention Assistant Team (IAT).

Administrative Intervention

Students who exhibit serious or chronic violations of school-wide expectations or the HISD Students Rights and Responsibilities will be referred to an administrator. 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.

In-School Suspension

The in-school suspension will be used as a consequence, depending on the severity of the incident. Students serving in-school suspension will spend a portion of the day with an administrator and in another classroom performing alternative appropriate academic work.

School Agreements

Gabriela Mistral follows Conscious Discipline:

- Listening Ears
- Walking Feet
- Kind Words
- Soft Touches
- Be Safe

School Rules

- Students will be expected to respond positively to directions from all staff members and volunteers.
- Students must 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 personal items such as toys, electronics, jewelry, etc.

Parents will be contacted about recurring disruptive or inappropriate behaviors.

Parents must 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
- Shoes with laces
- Temporary tattoos
- Dyed or colored hair
- Short dresses, spaghetti straps, short skirts, or shorts.

Students must wear:

- Tennis shoes with Velcro strap
- Walking shorts, skirts, or dresses knee length.
- Girls are encouraged to wear shorts under skirts or dresses.

PROGRESS REPORTS & 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's academic transcript. Every six weeks, it is sent home. This report provides information regarding student academic and social skills. We encourage you to meet with your teacher to review these reports and any time you may be concerned about your child's social and/or academic progress.

CELEBRATIONS

School Celebrations

In HISD, three parties per year are permitted for each class. These are our Winter Holiday celebration, San Valentine's Day, and End of Year parties. **No unscheduled parties are permitted.**

Birthday Parties

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, party favors, etc.).

MEDICAL CARE

Medical Care at School

The school nurse will contact parents or emergency contact people listed on the emergency form if the student is ill or sustains an injury while at school. The importance of listing and constantly updating all emergency telephone numbers on your child's emergency card cannot be emphasized enough. Please ensure all numbers are up-to-date and legible. If parents are not available to pick up the student when ill at school, it is essential for you to have a backup plan. By law, we cannot have a student ill, with a fever, or an injury, for more than an hour in the clinic. **Parents must plan to pick the student up within an hour of being contacted, or an ambulance will be called.**

Immunizations

Houston ISD complies with state laws (TEC 38.001) on vaccinations to protect every child and school personnel from contagious diseases. The children that do not have the required immunizations within the first 30 days of school must be excluded from attending school until records are updated or an exemption is filed.

To enroll your child, you must provide a record of your child's current immunizations. Your child will be eligible to enroll provisionally if the required immunization process has begun. You have 30 days to complete the requirements. The nurse will update the student's records every 30 days. Parents will be notified throughout the year by letter and phone call if records are to be updated. After the 30 days grace period, the student will be excluded from attending school until records are updated, and proof is provided to the nurse.

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 trained personnel are allowed to administer prescribed medication to a student during the school day. Medication will not be given without written authorization from the student's physician. Students with prescribed medication that is expired or unavailable will not be allowed to attend field trips due to their safety. Prescribed medication must have a pharmacy label indicating student's name, dose, and expiration date. For Epi-Pen Jr, parents are allowed to bring one to campus and keep one at home. Ensure the Epi-Pen Jr on campus is in the original box with the pharmacy label on it.

The nurse cannot administer over-the-counter medication (Tylenol, Motrin, Benadryl, etc.) In case of a severe allergic reaction, it must be a prescription medication with proper doctor's approval.

The parents are allowed to come to campus and provide medication for rashes or non-emergent allergic reactions.

However, parents are not allowed to come and administer fever-reducing medicines to students.

The students are **NOT ALLOWED** to bring medications in their backpacks. A parent or guardian must come and give the medication to the nurse. If medication is found, it will be confiscated, and the parent will be contacted to retrieve the medication from campus.

Illness and Injury

Students with fever, vomiting, diarrhea, 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 removed entirely as soon as the referral letter is received to avoid school absences. The teacher will require an official 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.

If the child sustains an injury requiring medical attention, a doctor's note must state any restrictions to prevent further injury before returning to school. If the child had an accident at home with bruises or marks, or if the child is not feeling well, you can stop by the nurse's office before you drop the student at school. The nurse is available at 7:00 am. Please refer to the nurse's chart provided.

Screenings

By law, every campus is required to administer vision and hearing screenings every year to every student. The nurse will conduct these screenings during September and October. If your child is required further evaluation, a printed referral will be provided to the parents after screening is completed. If this is the case, please bring the referral to your child's physician to fill out any findings and return them to the nurse as soon as possible.

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 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, the Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC), is the ruling body of the school. Every year, two spaces on the SDMC are reserved for parents of Mistral students. Parents may also address the SDMC to resolve concerns about 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 through the PTO at all times.

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.

PTO

Mistral has a very active PTO. You can be part of the PTO in different ways. You can serve as a member of the PTO, you can support PTO with an annual fee, or you help PTO by volunteering your time during some of the events they organize throughout the 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 am to 7:30 am.
- Students arriving after 7:45 am 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 I.D., such as a valid driver's license. Return your pass when leaving the building so 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 on our campus from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm. 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 713 773-6253.

Bathroom Issues

Gabriela Mistral students **must** be toilet-trained and able to change themselves independently. However, some students will still have some urine or bowel accidents. If the student has a urine accident, we will encourage them to change in the classroom bathroom. If the student has a bowel accident, they will be sent to the nurse, who will contact the parents to pick up the student from school to be showered to prevent rashes.

Please ensure we have a change of clothes and a pair of shoes at school at all times. When your child has an accident, the soiled clothes will be sent home in the backpack, and you will need to renew the emergency set of clothes. 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 that everything will 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, he or she will change their clothes independently. 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, the wraparound specialist will be contacted to find out if we have clothes their size.
4. If the accident cannot be resolved with a clothes change, office staff will contact the parent to pick the student up to be showered at home.
5. Parents will be contacted to pick the student up if the student has two urine accidents or bowel accidents on the same day.

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.