



## **Parents' Guide**

**2025-2026**

# Parents' Guide

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year! We are excited to begin this journey with you and your child as they experience their first year of formal schooling. Our team is dedicated to creating a nurturing, safe, and enriching environment where every child can thrive.

## School Hours

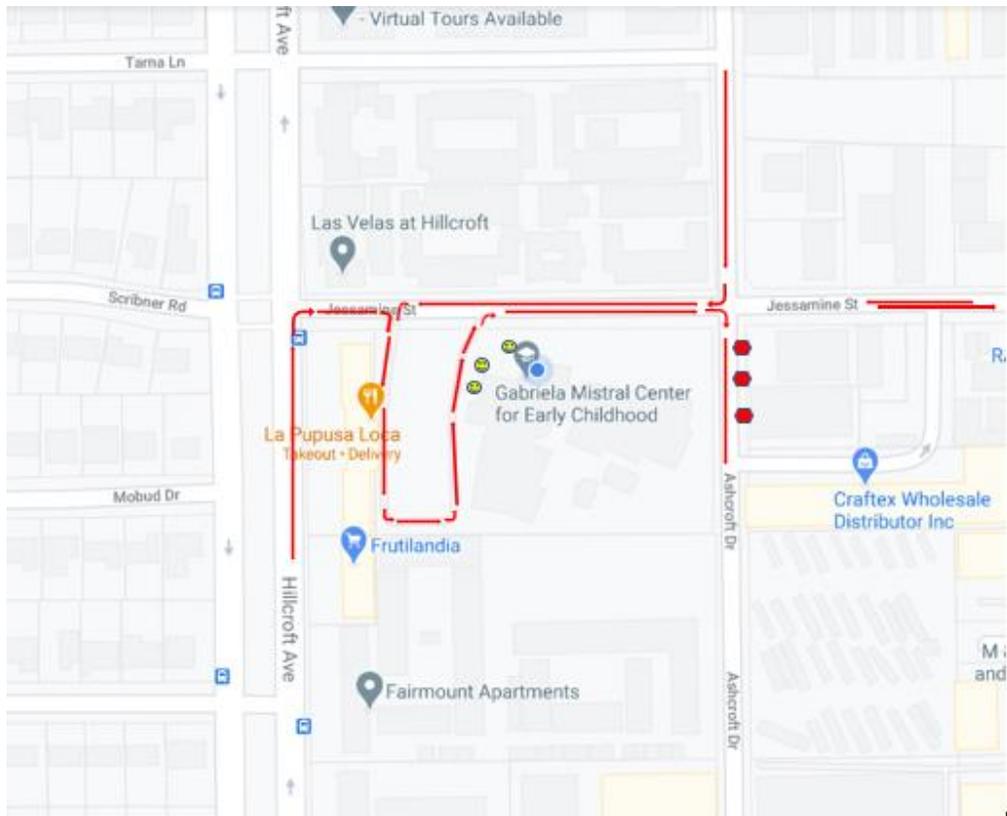
- Office Hours: 7:10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- Breakfast: 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. (served in classrooms)
- School Day: 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Tardy Bell: 7:45 a.m.

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

- Supervision begins at 7:10 a.m.
- Students enter classrooms at 7:30 a.m.
- Parent conferences will not be held during arrival or dismissal.
- To contact your child's teacher, please schedule an appointment during their conference time or after school.



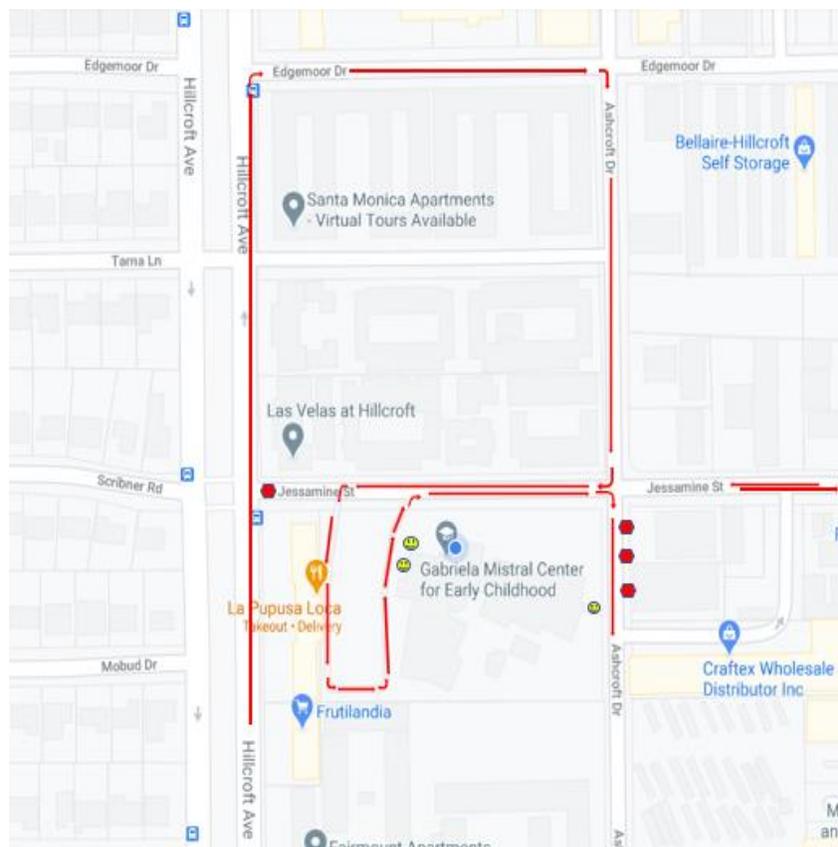
## Dismissal

- All children must be picked up by 3:10 p.m.
- Car riders wait in the cafeteria and are escorted by staff to vehicles.
- Walkers wait in the hallway; parents must meet their child at the Ashcroft gate.
- Once transportation is selected, it should remain consistent. Changes must be submitted in writing to the front office by 10:00 a.m.
- An authorized adult with a valid Mistral transportation tag must pick up all students.
- Entry from Hillcroft St. is not permitted for dismissal.

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 it. 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.** If 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 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.** You must line up on Jessamine to enter the U-Drive.

# ATTENDANCE

## Attendance/Absences

- Consistent attendance is crucial to your child's development.
- HISD allows a maximum of 10 unexcused absences per year (5 per semester).
- Written excuses are required for 1-2-day absences; medical notes are required for absences of 3 or more days.
- Attendance is taken daily at 9:30 a.m. No student will be admitted after 9:30 a.m. unless they present a doctor's note.
- Excessive absences may lead to administrative intervention and attendance contracts.
- If the student is absent 10 consecutive day, the student will be withdrawn by Texas Law.

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 harms your child's ability to learn at the pace of 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 being referred to truancy.

A dated written excuse must be sent if the student is absent for 1 or 2 days, and a note from a medical professional must be sent to the teacher for each day a 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 chronic absences, the principal or a school administrator will schedule a parental 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

- Students may only be released to individuals listed on the emergency contact list with proper ID.
- No early releases after 2:00 p.m.

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.

# Meals

## **Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks**

- All meals are provided at no cost.
- Parents must complete a socio-economic form available in the front office.

## **Mealtimes:**

- Breakfast: 7:30 – 8:00 a.m.
- Lunch: 10:30 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

## **Snack Guidelines:**

- Healthy snacks only; (candy, cupcakes, or cakes will not be allowed on campus).
- Teachers will provide a snack list.

## **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**

- Walk quietly.
- Speak softly.
- Clean up after eating.
- Remain seated until dismissed.
- No restroom breaks.

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

- Always walk quietly 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

- Teachers will send home daily communication folders.
- Conference appointments can be scheduled during teachers' conference periods.
- School reminders are sent via flyers, newsletters, Parent Square App, email, and phone calls.
- Conferences may be scheduled by calling 713-773-6253. Teachers will respond to messages within 24 hours.

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 at a mutually agreed-upon time.

## 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 reply 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

- Keep all contact and emergency information updated.
- All authorized individuals picking up students must present a valid photo ID.

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 showing who can pick up their child from school. In addition, a picture ID will be required from all people checking out students. **We will make no exceptions.**

# DISCIPLINE

## Student Conduct

At Gabriela Mistral, we are committed to every student's academic success. Therefore, we expect each student to always 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.

- Respect for staff, volunteers, and peers is expected.
- HISD's Code of Student Conduct will be enforced.
- The "Zero tolerance" policy applies to safety violations.

All students and parents will have access to the Code of Student Conduct online.

### **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

### **Administrative Intervention**

- Serious violations will be referred to administrators.
- Consequences may include conferences, suspension, or alternative assignments.

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 Code of Conduct.

### **In-School Suspension**

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

### **School Agreements (Conscious Discipline)**

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

### **School Rules**

- Follow staff directions.
- Respect for property and personal space.
- No profanity or vulgar language.
- No aggressive play or fighting.
- No personal items (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.**

# 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.

### Dress Code

#### Allowed:

- Clean, comfortable clothing
- Tennis shoes with Velcro
- Knee-length walking shorts, skirts, or dresses (shorts under dresses recommended)

#### Not Allowed:

- Open-toe or high-heel shoes
- Shoes with laces (unless child can tie)
- Temporary tattoos
- Dyed/colored hair
- Spaghetti straps, short skirts, short shorts

# 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. It is sent home every six weeks and 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

- HISD allows three class parties per year: Winter Holiday, Valentine's Day, and End-of-Year.
- **No unscheduled or additional parties permitted.**
- Birthday celebrations may include non-food treat bags with teacher's prior approval.

### 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, you must 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. Children who 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-day grace period, the student will be excluded from attending school until records are updated and proof is provided to the nurse.

## **Medication**

- Prescription medication requires physician and parental authorization.
- Medication must be delivered by a parent in its original packaging.
- Over-the-counter medication will not be administered.
- Students may not transport 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 must be covered at all times at school. Hair nits and lice are also communicable, and all students must be COMPLETELY free of both before they can be permitted back in the classroom. To avoid school absences, these nits and lice should be removed entirely as soon as the referral letter is received. 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 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 nurses' chart provided.

## Screening

- Vision and hearing screenings are conducted annually.
- Referrals will be provided if further evaluation is needed.

By law, every campus is required to administer vision and hearing screenings to every student every year. The nurse will conduct these screenings during September and October. If your child requires 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

- Parent meetings and workshops
- Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC)
- PTO participation
- VIPS registration is required for volunteers

There are many opportunities for parent participation at the 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 register as volunteers using the VIPS registration form when consistently serving our school. Forms and registration support are always available through the PTO. 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 directions when helping in the school. Volunteer registration forms and background forms must be completed each school year.

## PTO

- Multiple levels of participation are available.
- Supports school events and activities.

Mistral has a very active PTO. You can participate in the PTO in different ways: you can serve as a member, support the PTO with an annual fee, or volunteer 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:

- Arrival: 7:10 a.m. - 7:30 a.m.
- Late after 7:45 a.m.
- All visitors must check in at the office with valid photo ID.
- Fire lanes and unauthorized parking areas were strictly enforced.
- Exercise caution when walking children to school.
- 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.
- 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 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 inquire about the after-school program with Mrs. Gomez; you can reach her at 713 773-6253.

### Bathroom Issues

- Students must be toilet trained.
- Parents must provide a change of clothes.
- Multiple accidents may result in the student being sent home.

### Lost and Found

- Located in the cafeteria.
- Items not claimed after a reasonable time will be donated.
- Label all items with your child's full name.

### Parent Involvement

#### Volunteer Opportunities

- Parent meetings and workshops
- Shared Decision-Making Committee (SDMC)
- PTO participation
- VIPS registration is required for volunteers