

# **Casis Elementary School**

## **2009-2010 Student-Parent Handbook**

**2710 Exposition Boulevard  
Austin, Texas 78703  
414-2062  
477-1776 (fax)**

**Casis Website – [www.mycasis.org](http://www.mycasis.org)  
Casis PTA Website – [www.casispta.org](http://www.casispta.org)  
Attendance Line – 414-0003  
Attendance Email – [ksallans@austinisd.org](mailto:ksallans@austinisd.org)**

**Principal: Patty Martin**

## **Letter from the Principal**

Dear Casis Elementary Parents:

The entire staff at Casis Elementary School is committed to providing each of its students with a quality education. We recognize that a successful school results from an active partnership with parents. To promote this partnership, this student-parent handbook describes guidelines and procedures that affect your child and your family. Please read the information contained in this handbook carefully, and keep it handy for use as a reference.

As with any organization striving to improve, we often examine and refine our procedures. As the school year progresses, any significant changes in procedures will be communicated to you through our weekly communication system, the Friday Folder.

We are very excited about this school year and look forward to working with you to ensure your child's success. If at any time you have questions or suggestions regarding information in this handbook, or anything at Casis, please feel free to contact me. Your input is welcome.

Sincerely yours,

Patty Martin, Principal

## **Purpose of This Handbook**

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide to our school. It describes the school's practices and procedures, as well as parent and student responsibilities. This handbook should be used in conjunction with the Austin Independent School District Student Information Packet, Student Code of Conduct, and the policies of the AISD Board of Education ([www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/about/policy/district/index.phtml](http://www.austin.isd.tenet.edu/about/policy/district/index.phtml)) and the Texas Education Agency. Further questions may be directed to your child's teacher, the school counselor, assistant principal, principal, or office staff.

This handbook is not a contract. The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a guideline only. The routines and procedures contained within this handbook can be changed at any time.

## **About Our School**

### **History of Casis Elementary**

Casis Elementary began as a joint enterprise of the Austin Public Schools and the University of Texas. The school opened in 1951 with a regular school program, facilities and instruction for physically handicapped children, and an observation and demonstration center for the general improvement of education in Texas.

The school is named after Lelia May Casis (1869-1947) and Josephine Ramona Casis (1873-1947). The Casis sisters were born in Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies. Lelia Casis was awarded a Master's degree in Romance Languages from the University of Texas and became a full professor in 1916, the

first woman to achieve that honor. When she died in 1947, she ended a brilliant 50-year career of teaching at the University of Texas. Josephine Casis joined the Austin Public Schools staff in 1911. She taught in the primary grades at Palm School for 33 years until her retirement in 1944. Lelia and Josephine Casis bequeathed their entire estates to the University of Texas and the Austin Public Schools.

### **School Mission Statement**

Our mission at Casis is to provide a learning environment that will enable each student to work to potential in his or her quest to be a life-long learner and a productive member of society.

### **Casis Elementary School Profile – 2009-2010**

#### **General Information**

Date built:	1951
Permanent classrooms:	32
Portable classrooms:	18
Square footage:	90, 581
Classes per grade level:	
<i>Early Childhood</i>	2
<i>Pre-Kindergarten</i>	1
<i>Kindergarten</i>	7
<i>First Grade</i>	7
<i>Second Grade</i>	7
<i>Third Grade</i>	6
<i>Fourth Grade</i>	7
<i>Fifth Grade</i>	4

#### **Student Profile**

Total enrollment (approximate):	840
Number by ethnic background:	
<i>African American</i>	31      3.7%
<i>Asian/Pacific Islander</i>	19      3%
<i>Hispanic</i>	86      10.4%
<i>White</i>	686      82.8%
Boys:	459      53%
Girls:	331      47%

#### **School Colors and Mascot**

The Casis Elementary School colors are blue and white. Our school mascot is the cougar.

#### **Daily Routines at Casis**

This section covers basic, yet important, routines during your child's school day.

#### **Daily Schedule**

7:20 a.m.	Breakfast is served in the cafeteria.
7:30 a.m.	School office opens.
7:40 a.m.	Students report to classrooms.
7:45 a.m.	Tardy bell rings. School begins.
2:45 p.m.	Students are dismissed.

- 2:45 - 3:30 p.m. Teachers remain at school for planning and are available for prearranged conferences.
- 4:00 p.m. School office closes.

### **An Important Note on Daily Routines**

Elementary school children need the security of knowing exactly what to do when the school day is over and should be reminded regularly as to how they will go home. We can relay messages to your child through the school office if an emergency necessitates a change in plans. Please make a predetermined plan for rainy days so as not to burden the office staff and teachers with numerous extra phone calls. Be sure to tell your child to tell the teacher on crossing duty and to go to the school office for help in case he or she misses a bus or carpool ride.

### **Arrival at School**

The school day for kindergarten through fifth-grade students is from 7:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Students not accompanied by adults should not wait in the halls, on the playground, or outside the portables before 7:40 a.m. Students who arrive at the school before 7:40 a.m. should report to the cafeteria.

### **Transportation to and from School**

The safety of students is a major concern of parents and school staff. The school's rules for walkers, bicycle riders, and drivers are of primary importance in maintaining an accident-free environment for all of our students.

**Important: Everyone and anyone driving children to and from school is responsible for understanding and following all safety rules. This includes parents, relatives, babysitters, friends, and others. Please notify the school staff or principal if you have any concerns or suggestions.**

### ***Rules for Walkers***

- Always follow a planned, direct route to your destination.
- Walk on sidewalks.
- Cross streets at corners only, after making sure conditions are safe.
- Do not talk to strangers or accept rides from strangers.
- All students (even those accompanied by adults) must cross streets near the school only with the safety patrol or crossing guard. Wait until the crossing guard has stopped traffic and calls you before you begin crossing.

### ***Rules for Bike Riders***

- All bicycle riders must wear helmets.
- Always follow a planned, direct route to your destination.
- Obey all traffic signs as well as the directions of crossing guards.
- Use both hands to steer. Put all your things in a backpack so your hands are free.
- Always make eye contact with drivers when crossing traffic.
- Bicycles must be walked while on campus.
- Bicycles must be parked and locked each day in the school bicycle rack.
- Perform regular safety checks on your bike.

### **Rules for Drivers**

- **Dropping off and picking up.** Students may be dropped off and picked up at the following locations:

*Kindergarten, Pre-K, and Early Childhood:*

Front circle driveway

*First, second, third grades:*

North side of Hillview Road

*Fourth and fifth grades:*

South side of Northwood Road

If you are dropping off or picking up multiple students from different grades, use the location for the student in the highest grade.

Please do not drop off or pick up students in the staff parking lot. Do not use the Casis Village parking lot for either dropping off or picking up students. When dropping off or picking up students in the front circle driveway, pull forward as far as you can on the right in single file. Stay in your car while children are helped in and out of the car by a teacher or safety patrol member. Always pull up on the right to drop off or pick up students. When dropping off or picking up students on Hillview or Northwood, please pull up to the bottom of the steps in single file. **Do not block crosswalks, and do not make U-turns.** Students must cross the streets at the crosswalks to access cars parked opposite the school.

- **Parking and walking.** Do not leave your car at the school-side curb in the circle driveway between the hours of 7:00 - 8:00 a.m. or 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Parking along the school-side curb is for buses only during these times. Do not park in the teacher parking lot. Please be considerate of the merchants at Casis Village when using their parking lot for school business. Park only in the spaces designated as school parking.
- **Crossing streets.** Parents parked on the south side of Hillview Road must walk their children across the crosswalk if no crossing guard is present. Parents parked on the north side of Northwood Road should also escort their children across the street at the crosswalk.
- **Use caution.** Please be cautious when approaching the stop sign at Exposition and Northwood, as children cross the street there. In general, don't be shy about reminding another driver to follow our safety procedures. Remember: Slow down, be patient, and pay attention!
- **Missed carpools.** Teachers are assigned to assist children on Hillview and Northwood. Students not picked up from school by 3:00 p.m. will be escorted to the office by the teachers on duty.

### **Safety Patrol**

The Casis safety patrol is a community service that the fifth-grade students provide for their school. Just prior to the end of each school day, safety patrol members, wearing orange vests, take their stations in the halls and on the sidewalks to help ensure that children walk safely to and across Hillview Road and Northwood Road. Adult crossing guards assist students and others in crossing Exposition Blvd. at the school's main entrance and at the intersection of Hillview Road and Exposition. Each fifth-grade class serves as safety patrol on a rotating basis. The safety patrol is an important service and its participants are to be treated with respect by all students and parents.

## **Bus Information**

Students living more than two miles from school, but within the school attendance boundaries, are eligible for bus service. The school office can provide copies of the bus routes and designated stops. Guests of children riding the bus must give the driver a written permission form signed by the parent or guardian, and an administrator, before entering the bus.

### ***Rules for Riding the Bus***

Students riding the bus must abide by the following rules:

- Stay in your seat.
- Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
- Do not throw objects inside the bus or out the window.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Do not use tobacco products of any kind.
- Do not engage in destructive behavior.
- Be courteous.
- Cooperate with the bus driver.

Please note that the bus driver is authorized to assign seats. The bus driver waits and watches to see that all students dropped off in the morning are inside the building before leaving.

### ***Consequences of Rule Violations***

If a student violates one or more rules for riding the bus, the bus driver will report the violation(s) to the school staff. The student will then have a conference with the school staff and the student's parents will be notified. For a second offense, the student may be suspended from the bus, the student's parents will be notified, and the school staff will issue a written warning of the consequences of future violations. For a third offense, the student will be suspended from the bus for up to three days. For a fourth offense, the student will be suspended from the bus until an agreement is reached between the student, parent, principal, and bus driver. A major rule violation may result in a student's being suspended from the bus on the first offense.

### **Tardy Policy**

All students should be in their classrooms by 7:45, when the tardy bell rings. Your assistance in arranging for your child to be at school between 7:20 and 7:40 will help to ensure that they get off to a great start each day. If your child will be arriving to school more than 15 minutes late, please have them check in at the office prior to going to the classroom. Please be aware that students who are tardy disrupt the classroom and miss out on instruction. Persistent tardiness is not acceptable. You will be notified if there is a concern about your child's timeliness. Any time a student is tardy and/or absent more than three times in a four-week period, the Austin ISD automatically sends a warning letter to parents.

### **Absence Policy**

Regular attendance is a critical factor in student learning. Please bring your child to school every day, unless he or she is sick.

Attendance is checked every morning by 10:00 a.m. If a student is not present at that time, that student will be counted absent, unless the student has a note from a physician. A child brought to school at any time during the day with a doctor's note will not be counted absent. Please send an email to

Kaysie Sallans, Attendance Specialist, at [ksallans@austinisd.org](mailto:ksallans@austinisd.org) whenever your child is absent from school. This will prevent our staff from having to call you to find out why your child is out. The email should be received no later than 10:00 a.m. on the day of the absence and should include the student's name, grade level, teacher's name, the reason for the absence and the date(s) of the absence. For audit purposes, parents should send a note with the same information when the student returns to school. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Texas law requires that students be in attendance at least 90 percent of student days in order to be passed to the next grade. Excused and unexcused absences count as non-attendance days. You will be notified if there is a concern about your child's attendance. Any time a student is tardy and/or absent more than three times in a four-week period, the Austin ISD automatically sends a warning letter to parents.

### **Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence**

Senate Bill 83, passed in 2003, requires students to recite the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag and the pledge of allegiance to the Texas flag each day. If you do not want your child to participate in one or both of these pledges, please let us know in writing and we will honor your wishes. Senate Bill 83 also requires students to observe a full minute of silence following the recitation of the pledges of allegiance. During this minute of silence, students may reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student.

## **General Policies and Procedures**

### **Contacting Students at School**

In general, most teachers do not answer their telephones during instructional time. Whenever possible, we ask that you communicate after-school, doctor visit, special lunch plans or other arrangements with your child before they leave for school in the morning. Included in this directory is a phone list for the entire school. You can help us be more efficient in the office by using teachers' direct lines when you would like to leave them a message.

### **Student Telephone Use**

A school office is a busy place, and the office phone is primarily for the use of office staff. Students may use the office telephone only in case of emergency.

### **Visitors at Casis**

For the safety of the children at Casis, all visitors to the school, including parents, must enter the school through the main door near the school office. All visitors must sign in at the school office, with their driver's license to obtain a visitor's badge, and wear the badge for the duration of their visit. Texas law prohibits unauthorized visitors in or around public schools.

### **Students Leaving School Early**

In order to leave school early, a student must bring a note signed by that student's parent or guardian that indicates the date and time that the student will leave. For student security, parents may be asked to show identification and must sign students out from the office. Your cooperation and understanding is appreciated.

## **Inclement Weather**

The AISD school calendar designates two days for making up for school closings due to bad weather. In case of bad weather, you may call the AISD switchboard at 414-1700 to find out about school closings or delays. You may also tune to any of the major radio or television stations for news of school closings.

## **Dress Code**

AISD's Student Dress Code was implemented in Fall 2004 to maintain a safe, respectful and positive learning environment and to model good citizenship. All clothing should be appropriate to the student's age, the school setting, and weather conditions. Clothing may not advertise, condone, depict, or promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs; also prohibited is clothing with vulgar or obscene language, or with images or writings that promote disruption of the educational setting. Specifically, the following clothing items are no longer allowed by AISD: baggy pants, elongated armholes, bare midriffs, halter tops, low cut necklines, oversize shirts, distracting shorts or skirts, spaghetti straps, flip flops and caps/hats.

## **Bullying**

The term "bullying" includes aggressive behavior or intentional harm-doing which can be physical, verbal, or emotional and is carried out repeatedly over time, and occurs among students in which the student who bullies has more power than the target. The power advantage may be due to age, size, ability, popularity, or other factors that create a power imbalance between the bullier and the target. Bullying will not be tolerated at school or school-sponsored events. Students who believe they have been bullied are encouraged to promptly report such incidents so that appropriate action can be taken.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Casis Elementary School believes all students should receive an education in an environment free from sexual harassment or any other inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature. Casis Elementary School is committed to creating a safe, healthy learning environment for all students that encourages respect, dignity, and equality among students. Thus, sexual harassment of students, teachers, and staff will not be tolerated at school or school-sponsored or school-related activities such as field trips or special events where the student is under the control of the school.

Austin I.S.D. encourages parent and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sexual harassment in the public schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about this area with a teacher, counselor, or principal.

What is sexual harassment? School should be a fair place where people treat each other with respect. However, it is difficult to have fairness and respect when people are treated in ways that make them feel bad or uncomfortable. Sexual harassment is a form of disrespect that consists of abusive, unwanted, or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. This conduct may take the form of spoken words or physical acts. Sexual harassment is against the law and will be reported to school officials. There is no time limit on making a sexual harassment report, but reporting the problem as soon as possible helps Casis Elementary School in investigating and finding correct information. Casis Elementary School will not tolerate retaliation for reporting sexual harassment.

### **Treatment of Books**

All textbooks and library books are the property of the state of Texas and are loaned to students free of charge. However, students are responsible for lost or damaged books and will be expected to pay for them. Students are urged to take good care of books to avoid an assessment at the end of the year. The school will provide book covers to students for the protection of books.

### **Books from Home**

Please do allow your child to bring favorite books to school, marked with his or her name. We want to encourage a love of reading, and sometimes these books can be incorporated into the class day.

### **Lost and Found**

Misplaced items found at the school are placed in the school's lost and found. The lost and found rack is located in the hallway leading toward the 200-wing (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms). Parents should mark children's clothing, lunch container, backpack, etc., clearly with the child's first and last names. Unclaimed items are given to charity at the end of each nine weeks.

### **Registration Forms**

Students enrolled at Casis do not need to reregister to enter the following year. Each spring an AISD registration form is sent home for updating. Please be sure to keep us up to date on registration data and emergency contact information. Registration forms may be updated at any time in the school office.

### **Toys at School**

Toys, electronic games, and game cards, etc., are not appropriate for school and should be left at home unless approved by your child's teacher for a school activity.

### **Cell Phone & Portable Electronic Devices**

Students are allowed to possess cell phones on campus, but they may not be activated during the instructional day. Other electronic devices, including MP3 players, Walkmans, iPods, Gameboys, Nintendo DS and PSPs may be within a student's possession, but they must remain off and out of sight during the school day. If cell phones or other electronic devices interrupt or disturb instruction, the teacher may confiscate the device and turn it in to the office. Personal (non-work related) cell phone usage is not permitted to interrupt the workplace nor instructional environment. **Casis is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones and electronic devices.**

### **Pets at School**

Please refrain from bringing pets on campus (unless pre-arranged with the teacher for classroom instruction), so that all students and adults can feel comfortable and safe at school.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

At the discretion of your child's teacher, you may arrange to bring healthy birthday treats for the children to share at the end of the school day. Please be sure to make arrangements ahead of time. Some students have severe allergies to certain foods that need to be considered. If you wish to distribute party invitations at school, all children in your child's homeroom should be included.

## **Core Curriculum and School Goals**

### **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)**

Every day our world becomes more complex and demanding. To succeed beyond high school, students must be better prepared than at any time in the history of our state. Our expectations for our students and our schools are higher than they have ever been.

To meet these expectations, the State Board of Education has adopted a new curriculum for all Texas schools - the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). These learning standards will help ensure that all students meet the challenges ahead of us as we move into the next century:

- Each student must become a more effective reader.
- Each student will have to know and apply more complex mathematics.
- Each student needs to develop a stronger understanding of science concepts, especially in biology, chemistry, and physics.
- Each student must master social studies skills and content necessary to be a responsible adult citizen.
- Each student must master a wider range of technology.

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills identify what Texas students should know and be able to do at every grade and in every course in the foundation and enrichment areas as they move successfully through our public schools. Copies of the TEKS plan are distributed at the beginning of each year before Parent Information Night, and can also be found in the school library. Or, if you have Internet access, see the Texas Education Agency website at [www.tea.state.tx.us/resources/curric.html](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/resources/curric.html).

### **Campus Improvement Plan (CIP)**

Every year a campus improvement plan is developed, using input from the principal, staff, and parents, with the purpose of improving student performance. The plan sets objectives for the school and identifies ways in which the goals can be met, sets deadlines, and designates ways in which progress will be measured. The Campus Advisory Council reviews and approves the plan, and parent input is welcome. Copies of the current CIP are available in the school office and library.

### **School Report Card**

Each year, the Texas Education Agency prepares a School Report Card on each school. These reports are sent to all parents of children enrolled in public schools.

Each report card contains the following information:

- Academic excellence indicators (including TAKS results)
- Student/teacher ratios
- Administrative and instructional costs per student
- School performance

### **Exemplary Rating**

The Texas Education Agency has given Casis Elementary a rating of Exemplary, the highest rating used in its Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). Schools with the Exemplary rating must have:

- At least 90% of students tested, including various subgroups, pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) standardized test
- Attendance rates of at least 94%

## **Academic Policies and Issues**

### **Class Placement**

It is a complex process to create classes that address the needs of all students. At Casis, the process begins by gathering information about each student. The staff meets by grade level to develop class lists and determine the best-possible groupings. Parents may also provide information about any other issues that should be taken into account when making up class lists for the next year. The principal, assistant principal and counselor review this input and make adjustments to class groupings during the summer. Balancing students in classrooms and striving for appropriate student-teacher matches can improve opportunities for all children to get needed attention. In the interest of fairness, we ask that parents not request specific teachers or classmates by name.

### **Homework**

Homework is assigned on a regular basis beginning in first grade. The purpose of homework is to give students additional practice using skills learned in the classroom. Research indicates that homework can make a positive difference in student achievement. Increasing amounts of homework are assigned each year, as is developmentally appropriate. In addition, some teachers ask that students keep a reading log.

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's homework without doing it for them. Homework provides an opportunity to observe first-hand the concepts and skills your child is learning. Please contact the classroom teacher if your child consistently experiences difficulty with his or her assignments. The classroom teacher will contact a child's parents if the child is not submitting his or her homework or class work.

The following homework guidelines may be helpful for your child:

- Have a regular schedule for your child's homework, play, and chores. At least a half hour to one and a half hours should be allotted to homework. You may want to allow your child a break between the school day and homework.
- Provide a good work area with adequate lighting, a desk or surface upon which to work, necessary supplies, and a quiet, calm atmosphere.
- Let your child do the homework. Stay nearby to answer questions or offer guidance.
- Review completed homework with your child.
- Designate a special spot for your child's homework to be placed to prevent last-minute searches in the morning.
- If your child does not seem to understand the assignment, write a note on your child's paper in order to enable the teacher to re-teach your child. Please do not complete homework assignments for your child.
- Be sure your child returns homework to school on time.
- There may be consequences for homework not completed.

## **Student Report Cards**

Students receive report cards four times a year, at the close of each nine-week grading period. Report card envelopes must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the school. Any time a student's average is C- or below, or if work for a Pre-K through Grade 2 student falls into the "Needs Improvement" category, parents will be notified by the teacher.

### ***Grades Pre-K - 2***

In grades Pre-K through 2 the criteria below are used to reflect achievement in each subject area. Plus (+) and minus (-) are not used:

- 4      Advanced
- 3      Skilled
- 2      Basic Understanding
- 1      Needs Improvement

### ***Grades 3 - 5***

In grades 3 - 5, letter grades, along with plus and minus, are used to reflect academic achievement in each subject area. A uniform system for translating letter grades to numerical score ranges is as follows:

A - Excellent (90-100)	A+    (98-100)
	A      (94-97)
	A-    (90-93)
B - Good (80-89)	B+    (88-89)
	B      (84-87)
	B-    (80-83)
C - Fair (70-79)	C+    (78-79)
	C      (74-77)
	C-    (70-73)
F - Failing (Below 70 )	

In addition, Casis uses the following method to reflect progress in special areas and personal development for all grade levels:

- 4 - Consistently
- 3 - Often
- 2 - Sometimes
- 1 - Seldom

## **Standardized Tests**

### ***TAKS***

Third through fifth grade students take the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test in the spring of each year. This test is administered to determine whether students have learned the skills and met the objectives set by the Texas Legislature in the areas of reading and math (and also for fourth graders, in the area of writing). It is the responsibility of all teachers at all grade levels to be familiar with the objectives for each of the tests and to incorporate them into their lessons. In addition, fifth grade students will be assessed in the area of science. Students in grade 5 must pass the reading and math portion of the TAKS in order to be promoted to sixth grade. Instructional interventions,

including small group instruction and after school tutoring, are provided to help students who need additional assistance.

### ***TPRI***

The Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) is the state approved assessment tool chosen by the district to assess students in grades K-2nd. Teachers will assess their students using the TPRI twice a year according to the district calendar. Scores will be turned in to the district and principal. In kindergarten, the following concepts are evaluated: Graphophonemic Knowledge, Phonemic Awareness, Book and Print Awareness, and Listening Comprehension. In first grade the following concepts are evaluated: Graphophonemic Knowledge, Word Reading, Phonemic Awareness, Reading Accuracy, Reading Fluency, Listening Comprehension and Reading Comprehension. In second grade the following concepts are evaluated: Word Reading, Graphophonemic Knowledge, Reading Accuracy, Reading Fluency, and Reading Comprehension.

### ***Benchmark Tests from AISD***

We will administer District benchmark tests at various times during the year according the District testing calendar. The purpose of these tests is to assess student mastery of essential knowledge and skills in order to assist in preparation for the TAKS tests.

### ***Informal Assessments***

At least two times during the year, each student will be given an informal reading inventory designed to assess strengths and weaknesses in reading so that teachers can provide appropriate instruction. The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) is typically given in grades K-2 and the Burns and Roe is typically given in grades 3-5. The results of these tests may be shared during parent/teacher conferences, as appropriate. Informal assessments in math and writing will also occur throughout the year.

### **Permanent Records**

A cumulative folder on each student is maintained by AISD. The record includes factual information about the student (parents, date of birth, address), report cards, attendance records, achievement test results, and health records. You have the right to review your child's permanent record.

### **Special Areas**

In addition to studying topics in the core curriculum, Casis students take the following special-area classes:

- Art, music, and physical education (every third day), and
- Computer lab and Spanish (one day each week).

Because of recent budget cuts, homeroom classes may be split and then combined with other homerooms for special area classes.

### **Art**

Art instruction has been included in the curriculum since 1920 in the Austin public schools. Using a variety of media, students at Casis explore art techniques such as clay, collage, textiles, drawing, and painting. Two art teachers guide students through a sequential program building on learned skills year to year.

## **Music**

The general music program in all AISD elementary schools is based on the belief that music is an essential part of the education of every child. A year-by-year, sequential approach offers students at Casis the opportunity to master a wide range of music competencies through instruction by two music specialists. The students explore music through an activity-based program of singing, listening, creating, playing classroom instruments, and participating in dance, rhythmic, and dramatic activities. Classroom instruments that students play include the recorder, electronic keyboard, ukulele, guitar, and Orff instruments (xylophones, glockenspiels, and met allophones).

## **Physical Education**

The physical education program at Casis is geared toward quality and success. Activities and instruction are planned using the AISD Physical Education Curriculum Guide. Students are taught developmentally appropriate movement skills and concepts that emphasize knowledge, attitudes, motor skills, behavioral skills, and confidence needed to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Parents will be kept informed of upcoming units of instruction.

### *Work Out for Wellness Time (WOW)*

According to a State Board of Education ruling that went into effect September 2002, all students enrolled in kindergarten or grades 1-6 in an elementary school setting are required to participate in TEKS-based, structured physical activity for a minimum of either 30 minutes daily or 135 minutes weekly. For our students and teachers, this means that class recess (not lunch recess) on days that students do not have PE, becomes a structured physical activity time. During WOW, each grade level will use district-provided equipment and activity guides that focus on skill themes or aerobic games. Students will also walk or run as part of Marathon Kids. Our goal and desire is to maintain and improve the health and wellness of our students through Work Out for Wellness Time.

Casis students have the opportunity to participate in many special and district-wide events coordinated by the physical education department. These include: Track and Field, Marathon Kids, and fifth-grade volleyball.

## **Spanish**

Spanish is designed to help students develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and to introduce students to the cultures of Spanish-speaking peoples. Almost all students at Casis receive Spanish instruction. Kindergarten through fifth-grade students will receive Spanish instruction once a week for 40 minutes. The Spanish teacher's salary is funded by contributions from parents and other fund-raising efforts, sponsored by the PTA.

## **Technology Skills**

Casis has a full-time technology teacher and part-time assistant, funded by contributions from parents, sponsored by the PTA, who work with the classroom teachers to integrate students' computer skills with the classroom curriculum. Technology competencies have been established for each grade level and students' progress will be tracked from year to year. All students participate in computer classes.

## **Specialized Instruction**

The following types of specialized instruction are offered at Casis depending upon student needs.

### **Gifted and Talented (G/T)**

As mandated by the *Texas State Plan for the Education of Gifted/Talented Students*, those children identified as gifted will receive specialized instruction to enable them to reach their fullest potential. Most teachers at Casis are certified G/T instructors and have received 30 hours of specialized training. Teachers complete six hours of additional study annually. Students identified as gifted are clustered within a mixed-abilities classroom. All students are flexibly grouped within the classroom to meet their instructional needs. Teachers use a variety of strategies to challenge and enrich the learning of gifted students. Teachers use different strategies at different grade levels to meet the academic needs of their students. Strategies include exploring subjects in greater depth, independent study, and fewer practice activities.

A student must be nominated for the G/T program by a parent or teacher. Once nominated, students may be screened for identification with parent permission. The identification process occurs in the Fall and Spring. Parents are notified via the Friday folder regarding parent information meetings and identification procedures.

For more information, consult with your child's classroom teacher, the counselor, or an administrator. Further guidance in assisting gifted students is available from such groups as the Austin Association of Gifted and Talented. You can obtain contact information on these groups by asking for a copy of the school's brochure on our G/T program (available outside the school office).

### **English as a Second Language (ESL)**

In ESL, students participate in activities to help develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. ESL students come from many different backgrounds and cultures, and it is important that their school experience be a happy and welcoming one. We strive to recognize and respect these students' individual cultures while introducing the culture of the United States.

### **Reading/Learning Buddies**

In the Reading Buddies Program, students are matched with adult volunteers for one-half hour a week of one-on-one attention. Students who are identified by their teachers as needing extra help in reading, math, or spelling, or who may need a mentor or the opportunity for challenging projects, are eligible for the program.

### **Reading Specialist**

Two specially trained reading specialists are on our teaching staff to support struggling readers. The reading specialists work with small groups of students. This intervention is partially funded by the Casis PTA.

### **Special Education**

Special Education is one provision of a continuum of child-centered educational and supportive services available at Casis. An ARD (Admission, Review and Dismissal) Committee, made up of the child's parents, teachers, counselor, administrators, and other support staff, determine the appropriate Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each child in Special Education. A variety of services and instructional arrangements are available, depending on each student's needs. For example, some special education students are served in the regular classroom in an inclusive setting, while others receive services outside the regular classroom. If you believe your child is in need of special services, please speak with your child's teacher, the school counselor, or the school principal.

### **Pre-School Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD)/Early Childhood (EC)**

Pre-School Program for Children with Disabilities is a preschool program for children ages 3-5 with special needs. To qualify for the PPCD program, children must be screened and meet criteria set by the Austin Independent School District (AISD). In addition, a small number of (typically developing) children participate in these classes as part of a daycare/inclusion program, called the **Cougar Academy**. The tuition paid by these students funds an additional teaching assistant. The daycare students also serve as role models within the classroom. Contact AISD or the school office for more information.

### **Pre-Kindergarten**

Pre-Kindergarten is a full-day program for four-year-olds whose English is limited, or who are from low-income households. Contact the school office for more information.

### **Future Cougar Academy—Infant/Toddler Daycare**

Beginning in 2002-2003, Casis opened an infant/toddler daycare for the children of Casis and other AISD employees. The program is funded entirely by tuition payments and is designed to help us retain and recruit exceptional staff members.

### **Enrichment Programs**

These programs are offered school-wide to support teaching in each grade; they occur at various times through the school year.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are a regular part of our school program and are used as an introduction, extension, and/or culmination of a learning unit. All children are expected to participate in field trips. Financial assistance is available to those who need it to cover field trip costs. Parent approval forms are required, and students are not permitted to go on a trip without written permission. If you drive children on field trips, you must complete a proof of insurance form in advance of the field trip. The teacher will provide parent drivers with appropriate forms. Drivers must make sure that each child is buckled individually in a seat belt.

### **Science Fair**

Casis holds an annual Science Fair, in which students from participating grades may exhibit an experiment, a collection of objects, a model, demonstration, or display. Students and parents will receive an information booklet on the Science Fair, which includes its rules and describes the types of projects that can be submitted.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

In addition to programs held during the school day, a number of optional, after-school activities are sponsored by Casis. AISD offers support for new extracurricular activities and Casis is open to suggestions and input for future activities. How active these groups are depends upon current levels of interest and the availability of parent leadership. Further information about these activities will be sent home in the Friday Folder and will be announced in the principal's newsletter.

### **Volleyball Team**

Fifth-graders have the opportunity to participate on the Casis Volleyball Team in preparation for the AISD Volleyball Playday held each year in March. Practices are held after school, and students participating in the Playday can challenge the teachers in our annual faculty/fifth-grade volleyball game.

### **Leadership Casis**

The purpose of Leadership Casis is to develop student leadership and build character. Club members will organize Casis spirit days and community service projects. All fifth-grade students are invited to join.

### **Chess Club**

The Casis Chess Club is open to all students in second through fifth grades who are interested in playing chess. The Chess Club has an informal, in-club rating system; each student plays one or two rated games a week. Chess instruction is provided for those players who desire it.

### **Book Club**

The Casis Book Club involves students who love to read and talk about books. Parent sponsors meet with students after school who read a book each month and meet to discuss it.

### **Casis Times**

The Casis Times is a newspaper club that is available to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Parent sponsors meet with students after school once a week to learn writing skills and create a school newspaper.

### **After-School Enrichment**

The following are optional, fee-paid programs available after school.

#### **Extend-A-Care**

Extend-a-Care, a local, non-profit agency, offers a daily after-school program at Casis from 2:45 until 6:00 and on student holidays. You may obtain information on Extend-a-Care by calling 472-9402.

#### **StageSong Classes in Musical Theater Revue**

Directed by Music teacher Kevin Dunn, this program introduces students to the excitement of musical theater songs, light choreography, and expressive drama elements. All songs and lyrics are written by Mr. Dunn, a composer who has past publications and arrangements for choral and drama groups alike. Classes meet one hour per week and run from eight to twelve weeks. During the final week, a performance is given for parents and friends. StageSong handouts are sent home during the first weeks of school for interested students.

#### **Mad Science**

Conducted by trained university students, this program provides students the opportunity to experience dynamic, fun, hands-on science experiments. Students attend class after school once each week for an 8-week session. Several sessions covering varying topics are available and can be offered on an ongoing basis. Information handouts are sent home with students.

### **School Resources**

#### **Library**

The library is an integral part of the school educational program. A full-time professional librarian works with teachers to develop students' information-problem-solving skills and encourage the appreciation of literature. The library operates on a flexible schedule so students can come to the library as needed. The library collection is developed around the school curriculum, and reflects the reading interests and needs of the students. In addition to books and magazines, audiovisual and

electronic materials are available in the library. The library also provides guided access to online databases and other information resources on the World Wide Web.

### **Computer Lab**

Casis has a computer lab equipped with 30 Dell computers. Additionally, every classroom has access to the Internet.

### **Science Resource Room**

Casis has a science resource room that contains science materials available to all teachers. Parent volunteers inventory, organize, and distribute the science materials to teachers on request.

### **Literacy Library—Leveled Book Room**

Casis has a literacy library with books that are “leveled” so that they are appropriate for a student’s reading level. Teachers check out books to use with students for guided reading and to send home with students for practice. Parent volunteers help to keep the literacy library up-to-date, organized and functioning.

### **Parent-School Communications**

Casis provides several means of communication to help you keep informed about your child’s life at school. In addition to written communications, parents have numerous opportunities to gather information and meet with the faculty and staff on a formal and informal basis. We welcome and encourage parents to visit classrooms, assist teachers, and participate in activities and events. The sections below describe the means by which we ensure two-way communication between parents and the school.

**Note:** Whenever you have a question or a concern about any aspect of your child’s education at Casis, we want to know about it. Please do not hesitate to approach your child’s teacher with your questions - in person, by note, or by phone. We appreciate your sensitivity to and consideration of instructional time and teacher schedules when visiting classrooms or making requests for conferences. If, after discussing the issue with your child’s teacher, you still have questions, we urge you to consult with the school counselor, assistant principal, or principal. The staff at Casis welcomes the opportunity to work together with parents to resolve issues for each child’s benefit.

### **Friday Folder**

The Friday Folder is one of the primary communication instruments between school and home. It is sent home with each student every Friday. The folder usually contains:

- Student work
- A teacher newsletter (every other week)
- A principal’s newsletter (every other week) including a calendar of upcoming school events
- Bulletins and announcements from the PTA, AISD, and community groups

Please read the information in the Friday Folder carefully, and sign and return the folder with your child the following Monday. This system is designed to improve home/school communication by packaging take-home information together and sending it home on a predictable day. (Occasional notices or reminders may be sent home separately on different days, as needed.) If you do not receive a Friday Folder, be sure to ask your child where it is. Your cooperation is appreciated.

**Casis Web Site** ([www.mycasis.org](http://www.mycasis.org))

The Casis web site contains information related to school and PTA activities, as well as links to other web sites of educational interest to students and parents. Our web site is evolving and changes often. Please visit and let us know if you have suggestions.

**School Sign**

As a reminder to parents and students, the sign in front of the school displays the dates and times of major events at Casis and other notices.

**School Bulletin Boards**

Bulletin boards in the main hallways contain information about different organizations and topics, such as the Campus Advisory Council and the Parent Teacher Association.

**Principal's Newsletter**

"Notes from the Principal" is sent home bi-weekly in your child's Friday Folder. It includes information related to school-wide events and activities of interest to most parents.

**Teacher Newsletters**

Each teacher prepares a newsletter every other week, which is posted on the teacher's website or sent electronically. Teacher newsletters provide parents with information specific to their child's class, including the major skills and concepts introduced.

**AISD Calendar**

The Austin Independent School District calendar, which includes important district-wide dates, such as school holidays and parent-teacher conference days, is distributed at the beginning of each school year.

**Casis Directory**

The Casis directory, which lists all of the school's faculty, staff, and students, as well as a school calendar, is compiled by the PTA each fall and is available to parents electronically.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Communication between parents and teachers is essential for each student's progress. Parent/teacher conferences are held each fall and spring, on or near the dates indicated on the AISD calendar. Your child's teacher will schedule your conferences with you. At conferences, teachers and parents discuss a child's strengths and areas of need, and teachers review work portfolios, school-based assessments, and teacher observations. Together, parents and teachers develop action plans for the child and record the plans on a conference summary sheet. In the event that a parent is unable to attend a conference, the parent may request a telephone conference at a mutually agreeable time. If you have additional concerns or questions, additional conferences can be scheduled, possibly during the teacher's planning and preparation period.

**Parent Information Night**

At the beginning of the school year, you are invited to attend a Parent Information Night. At that meeting, teachers provide information about the curriculum for the school year and the methods and strategies for implementing the curriculum.

**School Survey**

Each year, Casis conducts a school survey to measure the school's effectiveness, as viewed by parents. Parents are asked to give their opinions of the school curriculum, instruction, leadership, facilities,

school events, and so on. The survey results are reviewed with the faculty and Campus Advisory Council to see where improvements can be made. Results are also sent home with each child. We would like *all* parents to complete the survey. We value and appreciate your input. (Please note that information that identifies specific staff members, students, or parents/guardians is not published in the survey results.)

### **Brown Bag Lunch with the Principal**

Each semester the principal holds brown bag lunches to meet with parents on an informal basis. The brown bag lunch is an excellent way to stay current on school concerns and to ask questions you may have about your child's education.

### **Parent Involvement at Casis**

Parent involvement is another critical element in the team effort of educating your child. Many avenues exist for parent participation in life at Casis.

### **Parent Teacher Association**

The Casis PTA is an essential, highly valued component of the school. Each year, our PTA provides dozens of services and raises thousands of dollars that enhance Casis' recognized level of excellence. It is through the energetic and dedicated efforts of our parents, teachers, and staff that the school continually meets students' needs.

Money generated from PTA fundraisers is used to help fund many programs and needs at Casis. These include Technology, Spanish, Art, Music, P.E., Library, cultural events and activities, field trips, staff appreciation, educational/instructional equipment and supplies, scholarships for numerous events, maintaining the school's physical appearance and playscapes, and many other educational enrichment and motivational programs.

We encourage all parents and teachers to become members of this large and active group. The PTA offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities designed to fit parents' busy schedules. Volunteer job sign-up sheets are sent home several times a year, or members can call the Volunteer Coordinator to offer their time and talents.

The dates and times of PTA meetings are included in the school calendar. Meeting minutes and events are posted on the PTA bulletin board (in the hallway near the counselor's office).

### **Casis PTA Website**

The Casis PTA website, [www.casispta.org](http://www.casispta.org) is a valuable resource for up-to-date information regarding Casis and the PTA.

### **Campus Advisory Council**

The purpose of the Campus Advisory Council (CAC) is to involve the professional staff, parents, and community members in establishing and reviewing the campus's educational plans, goals, and major classroom instructional programs. It also assists the principal in developing, reviewing, and revising the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP). CAC members serve staggered two-year terms. The CAC is an advisory group, and the final decision for any CAC recommendation is made by the principal.

All parents are invited to attend CAC meetings. Parents wishing to place an item on the CAC agenda should inform one of the co-chairs at least two weeks prior to a meeting. The meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m. Meetings are announced in the principal's newsletter.

### **Volunteering in the Classroom**

Many teachers welcome parents into the classroom to read to students, assist the teacher with clerical chores, or offer expertise relating to a specific area of study. Contact your child's teacher to find out about volunteer opportunities in the classroom.

### **Casis Discipline Policies**

A positive atmosphere is essential to high levels of student achievement. One key component of this atmosphere is the absence of disruptions. Students are expected to exhibit a high level of responsibility in their behavior. Students are expected to:

- Follow teacher directions the first time.
- Respect property, self, and others.
- Walk quietly in the halls.
- Be responsible for learning and behavior.
- Leave unnecessary personal belongings at home.

### **AISD Code of Conduct**

At the beginning of each school year, all parents receive a copy of the "Austin Independent School District Student Code of Conduct." The AISD Student Code of Conduct sets forth the rules for student behavior and the consequences for rule violations. You are asked to sign and return a receipt that acknowledges that you have received and reviewed the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Casis Discipline Guidelines and Procedures**

We believe that the consequences of a student's behavior should be meaningful and consistent with his or her social and emotional development and with the AISD Student Code of Conduct. We conduct periodic assemblies to reinforce school rules and expectations for behavior. In addition, teachers may have their own classroom behavior rules. For individual guidance, behavior contracts setting forth acceptable behavior may be entered into between teacher and student or among teacher, student, and administrator. Any time a child is sent to the principal's office for a serious behavior problem, the child's parents will be notified. Parents and students should refer to the "AISD Student Code of Conduct" for more information on unacceptable behaviors and the consequences for such behaviors.

### **Counseling Services**

Our counselor serves as a resource to students, parents, and staff through the four components of the district's Comprehensive Guidance Program:

- Guidance Curriculum - provides appropriate guidance content to students and provides leadership for our social skills curriculum *Casis Cares*.
- Individual Planning - assists students in monitoring personal development;
- Responsive Services - addresses the immediate concerns of students;
- System Support - facilitates school activities and services.

With an enrollment of approximately 840 students, Casis Elementary qualifies for the services of a full-time certified counselor. Students may access services by self-referral or through a parent, teacher, or administrator recommendation.

## **Food Service**

Both breakfast and lunch can be obtained at Casis. The school cafeteria serves breakfast from 7:20 until 7:40 each morning. Lunch is served from approximately 10:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., with each class having 30 minutes for lunch. Upon finishing lunch, children may go to the playground and play under the supervision of monitors for the remainder of their lunch periods.

## **Buying Lunch**

Breakfast, lunch, and milk may be purchased in advance. You may send in money for as many meals as you wish, and the cafeteria staff will keep track of the number of meals your child eats. When your account is getting low, the cafeteria staff will let your child know, but it is up to him or her to inform you that it is time to send more money. Meal card money is accepted by either teachers or cafeteria staff and must be in the cafeteria by 10:00 a.m. Money may be paid into the child's account on-line at MyLunchMoney.com or cash may be sent in an envelope with the child's name, the teacher's name, the student's bar code number, and the amount written on the front. Parents may designate on the envelope whether children may use the money for milk only, meals, snacks, etc. If no preference is noted, children will be allowed to purchase any item in the line with their money. For planning purposes, school menus are sent home in the Friday Folder just prior to the beginning of each month.

Prices are listed below:

Breakfast	\$ 1.25
Lunch	\$ 2.10
Milk	\$ .60

If a student forgets or loses his or her lunch money, the school will make arrangements for the child to have lunch that day. Parents who would like to apply for free or reduced meals for their children may do so at the office. Note: Parents are invited and encouraged to have lunch with their children. Meals for adults are \$3.00. Questions regarding Food Services may be directed to the Casis Cafeteria staff or the Food Services Central Office at 414-0251.

## **Cafeteria Rules**

We have 5 cafeteria rules that are posted in the cafeteria.

1. Walk at all times
  - Students should enter the cafeteria at a walk
  - Students should walk at all times when getting snacks, throwing trash, etc.
2. Remain seated at the tables, until the dismissal time
  - Students must remain seated for 15 minutes
  - Students may not stand or walk to visit with friends at other tables
  - Students may be dismissed when the flower is placed on their table, or they may remain to finish eating
  - Students line up at the door for dismissal
3. Talk quietly
  - Students must use quiet, indoor voices
  - Students may not yell across tables
4. Use good manners
  - Students should use good table manners, as if at home
5. Clean up
  - Each student is responsible for throwing away their own trash

- Every class should have 2 table wipers each day

### **School Health Services**

Casis participates in the Austin Independent School District Health Services Program administered by the Children's Hospital of Austin. A registered nurse is in the building approximately 25 hours a week, and a health aide is available 15 hours a week. The office staff provides care for ill or injured children during the remaining school hours. The nurse's office is located next to the main office.

### **Emergency Contacts**

At the beginning of the school year, you are asked to complete an emergency card that will be kept in the school office. Parents must provide their telephone numbers, as well as those of relatives and friends who can be reached in case their child is ill or injured at school. Please include pager and cellular numbers on the emergency card, and be sure to let friends know if they are designated as an emergency contact.

The office staff should be notified of any changes in emergency card information during the year. If a child needs emergency care and no one named on the emergency card can be reached, the school will call the City of Austin Emergency Medical Service (EMS). Parents are responsible for any medical bills from EMS and the hospital they use.

### **Illness**

Children should be kept home from school if they are experiencing the following:

- fever above 100.4 degrees F
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- irritating or frequent cough
- chickenpox
- conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- any other communicable illness

Students must be free of fever (without medication to reduce it) for 24 hours before returning to school. A child taking antibiotics should be on the medication a full 24 hours before returning to school. Please email the attendance clerk at [ksallans@austinisd.org](mailto:ksallans@austinisd.org) or send a note when your child will miss school.

### **Illness or Injury at School**

If, during the school day, a child has a higher than normal temperature, an injury that requires additional medical attention, or has other medical needs, you will be notified immediately by the teacher, school nurse, or office staff.

### **Medication**

If a child must take medication during school hours, his or her parents must sign a medication consent form and provide instructions to the nurse or the office staff before it can be given. Medication consent forms are available in the nurse's office.

**Important: All prescription and over-the-counter medications must be in their original containers and kept in the office. Do not send medication of any kind to school for your child to take on his or her own, unless an exception is made for student safety as outlined in AISD policy.**

## **Immunizations**

All students must be current on their immunizations. AISD maintains immunization records on your child from the time he or she starts school. Casis enforces state laws requiring records of mandated immunizations or proper exemptions. You will be notified in writing if your child needs an update.

## **Vision and Hearing Screening**

As an AISD service, vision and hearing screenings are given annually to children in grades pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, 2, and 5. Students in grades 1, 3, and 4 are screened only if the teacher recommends it. Screenings are announced in advance. If your child wears glasses, please make sure he or she wears or brings them to school to wear for the screening. Only those parents whose children fail the screening receive notification of results by mail. The health team re-screens students who do not pass the screening, and will call you if your child needs further evaluation. The health team will also screen for ARD (Admission, Review, and Dismissal) special education requirements.

## **Lice**

Lice infestations are a common occurrence among school-aged children and do not reflect on the hygiene standards of students or their families. To contain the spread of lice, parents who suspect their child has lice or has been exposed to lice should contact the child's teacher or the school nurse immediately.

Students found to have head lice are sent home for treatment. You will be notified if eggs are found; treatment will be discussed at that time. The health team is glad to provide information about treatment to parents and students at any time.

## **Crisis Management**

The safety and security of each and every individual at Casis is of the utmost importance. The school's Crisis Management Committee has reviewed guidelines for ensuring the safety of the children on our campus. The Committee has also developed procedures for managing crisis situations such as fire, natural disasters, bomb threats, utility emergencies, intrusion, as well as severe injury to or the death of a student, parent, or faculty member. These procedures are also consistent with AISD crisis management policy and guidelines.

The Committee has developed a notebook of crisis management guidelines and procedures, which is available for review in the principal's office. The Crisis Management Committee includes one teacher from each grade level, the school counselor, principal, and assistant principal, a parent, the nurse, and the school's AISD visiting teacher.

## **Safety Drills**

Instructions on how to respond in the event of an emergency, such as a fire or a tornado, are posted in each schoolroom at Casis. Teachers will provide directions to students in the event of any emergency. The school conducts safety drills as a safety precaution. Each drill shall be treated as if it were an actual emergency situation. Although speed is important in any such procedure, of greater importance is the ability of students to follow teachers' directions and proceed in an orderly manner.

## **School Environment and Safety**

### **School Security**

The safety of every child is of utmost concern to us at Casis, and we take the following security precautions:

- We ask our staff to be vigilant; visitors to the school are asked if they need assistance.
- Students travel in pairs when separated from the class for any reason.
- Any students who may be left behind after pickup time (3:00 p.m.) are escorted to the office.

### **Tobacco-Free Environment**

The use of all tobacco products at Casis, by both students and adults, is prohibited.

### **Asbestos**

AISD has its own licensed asbestos abatement department and is employing all the latest state-of-the-art measures in ensuring that the presence of asbestos building materials does not present an environmental hazard to the school population.

Asbestos-containing building materials are surveyed every six months, and all maintenance personnel (custodians and AISD Service Center workers) have received the required training on safe working practices in areas where asbestos-containing materials are found. In 1997, inspectors documented the presence of several asbestos-containing building materials at Casis, much of which was removed during the summer of 2000. Their report, and the district's recommendations for insuring building occupant safety, is found in the asbestos management plan. Parents with further questions about asbestos management should contact the Austin ISD Service Center.

### **Pesticides**

Pest management at Casis is carried out by the Integrated Pest Management Department at the AISD Service Center. AISD's method of pest control uses current information on the biology of pests and their interaction with the environment. This information, coupled with current pest-control methods, is used to control pest damage economically and with the least-possible hazard to people, property, and the environment. All pest-management options are taken advantage of, including the judicious use of pesticides.

Periodic applications of pest-control agents are made from time to time. They may be pre-planned or conducted on an as-needed basis. In the case of planned applications, signs are posted in common-access areas at least 48 hours in advance. Parents with further questions about AISD's use of pesticides may contact the Service Center's Integrated Pest Management Department.

### **Recycling**

Casis recycles mixed paper, and cardboard. The recycling container is located at the back of the school near the cafeteria.