



**CLIFFORD SCHOOL**

**SURVIVAL GUIDE**

**This guide is brought to you by:**

The Clifford School Parent-Teacher Organization  
225 Clifford Avenue  
Redwood City, CA 94062

[www.CliffordSchoolPTO.org](http://www.CliffordSchoolPTO.org)

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# CLIFFORD SCHOOL SURVIVAL GUIDE

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### **About Clifford School**

Clifford School is a K through 8 school, which historically has had a focus on marine science and technology. Through our partnership with the Marine Science Institute, this program continues, with in-class science exploration and field trips. Clifford maintains high academic standards offering a rigorous program that meets the needs of all students. Clifford staff, students, and families work together for a common goal of improving student learning and student achievement.

### **About the Clifford Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)**

Clifford PTO is an organization of parents, teachers, and staff working together to make a difference. Our goal is to help make Clifford one of the finest schools around and to create a warm, safe, and enriched educational experience for all Clifford School students. If you are a Clifford parent, teacher, or a staff member, you are automatically a member of the Clifford PTO.

We help to provide enrichment programs, social events, classroom materials and financial support to the school. We sponsor several events throughout the year, including fundraisers, and are always looking for ways to improve our children's educational experience. We do not set curriculum or policy for the school. Our emphasis is on the extras that make Clifford School a great place to be.

**Meet and Greet.** Attend the PTO meetings to stay informed and have a voice in your child's school experience. PTO meetings are held regularly and announced in the PTO's newsletters and e-mails; the dates are listed via [www.cliffordschoolpto.org/about-us](http://www.cliffordschoolpto.org/about-us) (scroll down for info). Please join us! And for family fun, meet other Clifford families at our community builder events held throughout the year.

**Keep Informed.** Subscribe to the Clifford PTO Email Blast list and get important information conveniently sent directly to your email address. We send emails roughly twice per month, and we do not share email addresses with outside parties or businesses. To sign up, visit [CliffordSchoolPTO.org](http://CliffordSchoolPTO.org), select **About Us**, and choose **Email Blast** and complete the required fields.

### **School Communication**

**School Folder.** Flyers, notes, forms, and announcements are inserted into your child's folder, so be sure check your child's folder on a daily basis--particularly Wednesdays.

**Clifford News: text messages on your phone.** You can receive Clifford PTO news and alerts on your cell phone (no spam!). Simply text "Join cliffordpto" to (704) 323-7775.

**Teacher Email.** Depending on the teacher, emailing may be the best way to communicate directly with your child's teacher. Check with your child's teacher if this is a viable communication conduit. Teacher emails are listed in the Clifford Directory.

### **Clifford Directory**

A directory of classes and students is published and distributed by the PTO after the school year begins. It's a must-have resource for arranging play dates, birthday party invitations, homework coordinating, carpooling, creating class lists, and so on. Be sure to fill out the directory form ahead of time to be included in this year's directory.

### **Enrichment Programs**

Clifford offers a variety of extracurricular enrichment programs on campus for your child to participate in. Some of these programs include drama, yoga, martial arts, flower arranging, science, instrumental music lessons, Spanish, and hip-hop.

### **How can you help? Great volunteer opportunities:**

To find out more about the opportunities below--and others--contact the PTO's Volunteer Coordinator. Locate the parent's name via the "Who We Are" list at [Cliffordschoolpto.org/about-us](http://Cliffordschoolpto.org/about-us)--scroll down a bit on this page; check the PTO school directory for contact info or get in touch with any active member of the PTO to reach the coordinator.

**Crossing Guards.** Don't overlook this important job. It plays a vital role in keeping our children safe while crossing during the busy "drop off" and "pick up" hours. It takes only 20 minutes of your time in either the morning or afternoon.

**Art in Action.** It's a fact that Art plays a vital role in children's development. Art in Action, paid for by the PTO, is an excellent program that gives our children a wonderful opportunity to explore several different art forms and learn about some of the great master artists. For more info and great photos, check out [CliffordSchoolPTO.org/ArtinAction](http://CliffordSchoolPTO.org/ArtinAction).

**Auction Team.** "It takes a village" to run the auction event - typically we have this event every other year. Volunteer for an auction committee of your liking and be part of our most successful fundraising event! Some of the committees include decoration, set-up, business donations, classroom donations, matching auction winners with prizes, and marketing.

**Teacher & Staff Appreciation.** We love to show our dedicated teachers and staff members how much we appreciate them! The appreciation team regularly figures out ways to show our gratitude towards teachers and staff. For example: coffee and pastry mornings, lunches, and so on.

**Room Reps.** Being a room rep for your child's class is a great way to help and get involved with their classroom. You'll get to help coordinate class parties, events, and gifts for teachers--and pass on updates and other info from the PTO, when necessary.

**Middle School Reps:** Get involved as a liaison for middle school activities! Plan dates for parties on the calendar.

**Other areas: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade** students have a lot going on! Help plan for their field trip, dance, graduation celebrations, and pool party. Consider volunteering for the production of Clifford's **Year Book** or the **School Play**. Or on the **Communications** front, we always need writers and editors for articles or short blurbs for the newsletter and web site posts. Plus, we are always on the lookout for design and artwork creators to contribute to the creation of **PTO banners, posters, flyers**, and so on! We also appreciate any parent who wants to volunteer their time as a photographer! Lastly, inquire about volunteering your time for the PTO's **School Directory** and **Hospitality** area (planning food/drink for PTO events!).

**Multicultural Day.** This festival is one of our favorite social events of the year. The Clifford families and friends are invited to join together as a community and enjoy food, games, music, and entertainment. If you like planning parties or just like being part of a fun team, this is a great volunteer opportunity.

**Board member.** If you want to be part of the decision-making process, a board position might be just the thing for you. Check with any of the current board members to get information on board vacancies that might interest you.

### **Fundraisers**

**Auction.** Our Auction event is our biggest fundraising event. Enjoy an adult night out for dinner, wine, and shopping. It's a great opportunity to bond with other parents, teachers, office staff, and the community. And you can bid and win superb prizes.

**Read-A-Thon.** A fun educational experience for all our kids who track the books they read and invite sponsors to donate.

**Lap-a-thon.** A fun and healthy event for the kids on a school day! Students collect pledge money for each lap they run.

**Gift Wrap (and/or other fundraisers).** Be ready for that last-minute gift for any holiday or birthday! Buy wrapping paper and other supplies. Clifford receives a portion of the sales.

**Direct donation campaign.** This is a way we can all get involved, proactively, to help ensure continued educational excellence at Clifford. We are asking that each Clifford family pledge \$325 per student (or a \$\$ portion each month)--or whatever your family is comfortable with--in support of the Clifford PTO programs. All monies raised will go into the PTO's general fund and will be used to pay for programs like PE, Computer Skills, Science, Art-in-Action, the School Play, and so on. We can arrange for a one-time donation or automatic monthly deductions through your credit/debit cards. Alternatively, you can drop a check in the locked (black) box in the school office (labeled Parents Club).

**Corporate sponsorship & matching donations.** Do you work for an organization that offers a donation-matching program? If so, make your check payable to Clifford PTO, and save your paperwork (receipts or a copy of your check). Submit your receipts and necessary forms to your employer, following its protocol.

You will need the following information:

Organization: Clifford School Parents Club (official name)

Address: 225 Clifford Avenue, Redwood City, CA 94062

Tax ID: 94-2975493.

Contact: Clifford PTO Treasurer

Email: [treasurer@cliffordschoolpto.org](mailto:treasurer@cliffordschoolpto.org)

**Escrip.** Nothing could be easier! Enroll your grocery club cards and credit cards, and Clifford automatically earns money every time you purchase from participating vendors. It doesn't cost anything extra or require any extra effort beyond your purchase. If you aren't yet enrolled, sign up at [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com). Best of all, grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends can also support Clifford. Clifford's account number is 118392687. Our goal is to achieve 100% participation of our families.

**Box Tops.** Collect "Box Tops for Education" labels from your favorite General Mills cereals, cake mixes, flour, sugar and other packaged food products. Each label that is collected is worth 10 cents and can really add up! Each class has a collection container – just send those labels in with your child to turn in.

**Clifford Logo Wear.** Purchase Clifford logo wear for your children and yourself! Look for announcements and locations of logo wear sales; contact the logo wear coordinator; or go online at [cliffordschool.spreadshirt.com](http://cliffordschool.spreadshirt.com).

### **Cell Phone Policy**

Cell phones can be brought on campus, however, they must be turned off and concealed during school hours – including recess and lunch. Kids in Grades 6 through 8 must keep their phones in their lockers during the day; kids K through 5 need to keep them in their backpacks. They may be turned on only after the school day is over. Students caught violating the policy will have their phones confiscated. Confiscated units may be claimed in the office by a parent.

### **Lockers**

Lockers are located upstairs in the middle school buildings and are available to 6th-8th graders. Students are issued a locker after signing a **Locker Agreement contract**. Students must follow the locker rules contained in the contract or may have their locker privileges revoked by Clifford Staff.

### **Hot lunch program**

Hot lunch is available for purchase everyday in the Multi-Use Building. If you plan to take advantage of the hot lunch program, you may find it helpful to set up a family account for your child/children to draw upon. No more looking for lunch money everyday! You can leave a check, made payable to Child Nutrition Services, in the Cafeteria lock-box in the school office. You can prepay the account at the school and/or sign up at [ezschoolpay.com](http://ezschoolpay.com). You'll need your child's school ID to create your account; contact the office if you don't have this number. You can also use this site to keep an eye on the balance to log in. If you

inadvertently let the balance drop to zero before you add funds, the school will notify you, and your child will receive a full lunch. However, if you don't make a payment into the account after three lunches, the school can only provide "courtesy meals" of cereal and milk.

For more information on lunches from the School District, visit [www.rcsdk8.net/Page/106](http://www.rcsdk8.net/Page/106).

Note that the popular "Pizza Day" is once a week (see distributed menus).

### **Extended Care**

Private day care is provided onsite by The Neighborhood Kids Corner. They have both early morning care and after school care programs. Please contact the program director, Mary Jo Hernandez, at 650.367.7034.

### **Library**

The library is available to students through their scheduled classroom visits and other special library activities.

### **Homework Club**

The Homework Club is a program that happens after-hours in the library. As of this writing, the club welcomes students in grades 4 through 8 on a drop-in basis. Students are to work on homework and school projects only. Parents/teachers/tutors are welcome, however, due to limited space, they will be asked to leave to accommodate any student/s wanting to use the facility. Check with the school office on the current schedule of opening hours/days.

### **Computer Lab**

Clifford has a computer lab on campus, located in the Library Media Center. Access to the computer lab is available to students during their scheduled class time and as well as other posted hours. Some classrooms have computer banks that are in use throughout the day.

### **Bicycle policy**

Students in 3rd through 8th grades may ride their bicycles to school. Bicycle stands are located next to the MUB. Students riding their bikes to school must wear safety helmets. Students must walk their bicycles on school property and in crosswalks.

### **Dress Code Policy**

Students need to dress in a modest manner that is not disruptive to the school environment. They must dress in a manner that is safe for school activities including PE. Students may not wear clothing that advertises items that students may not legally purchase, that displays inappropriate language or pictures, or that is associated with gang identification. Clothing, makeup or jewelry that is a distraction to the educational environment or is unsafe, or inhibits participation in PE, is prohibited. Clothes shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments. Hats and caps can be worn outside for protection from the sun and the bill must face forward. Hats are not allowed to be worn in classrooms. Wearing head coverings for religious reasons or health reasons is permitted.

### **Earthquake & Emergency Preparedness**

The school has blankets on hand, non-potable water, toilets, and medical supplies. The district does not provide any emergency supplies. The staff has been trained on what to do if there is an emergency.

### **School Play**

Each year, a crew of dedicated parents, staff and students transform script to stage in a first-rate school production. Any interested students that audition will have the opportunity to show off their talents and participate in the school play. From auditions, to rehearsals, to the final production, students can get a small taste of the “Broadway life”.

### **Drop-off route and parking**

Please follow the drop off route as directed by traffic volunteers. You may also park in the upper parking lot--now expanded--at the intersection of Clifford Ave and Scenic Drive, or you may park on the street and walk your child to school. If you park on the street, please don't block neighborhood driveways. Remember that the school buses have priority and never leave your car unattended in the circle or red zone.

### **Kindergarten Survival Guide**

For families with kids starting their elementary school education, entering Kindergarten is often a time of excitement and anticipation. To help you feel a little more at ease, dear parents, here are some tips and insights we gathered from some families in the Clifford community. See quotes below in italics from Kindergarten parents, from the 2014/2015 school year. We hope you find this useful and we are so happy to welcome you!

### **Getting used to a new routine**

- Know it might take some time to get used to the new schedule and process. Learning a new routine takes time but you'll soon find your rhythm. (If that means rushing to line-up time with seconds to spare every day, that counts!)

*“The first month was hard to get adjusted. I had three kids to manage all under five. None of us were used to parking up the big hill, walking in, dropping off, then walking back up the steep hill and doing it again in the afternoon for pick up. Physically it was a lot for all of us. But I would say to the next group of kindergarten families, somehow you get used to it and it becomes routine--just give it two months, haha! I became grateful later that drop off and pick up gave me the opportunity to get to know the other parents so well.”*

- Trust in the process and support the teachers who once described the first few weeks as "boot camp". The teachers are so experienced and they know they have to set the rules in those first few weeks.



*“Follow the teachers’ suggestions to make your child hang up their own backpack and jacket, put their own folder in the bin, etc. In a short time the kids go from a wiggly, tearful, and distracted bunch to forming a straight line, looking forward, backpacks up, jackets off, ready to start their day. It always amazes me.”*

*“There are good and bad moments--remember it is a process, an evolution. Trust the journey. The teachers are AMAZING!”*

- Remember you're in it for the long haul. You don't have to do **everything** in the first year--or push your child to be involved in every after-school activity that is offered (e.g. the school play, dance, etc). Kindergarteners need down-time too. Get your feet wet and learn about all the many activities and events and figure out which ones you want to be part of.

### Helping a child who may feel homesick (a.k.a. My kid is crying at drop-off)

- Give your child a small token of comfort. No, loveys and toys are not permitted, but some families got creative:

*“My son really had a hard time feeling homesick that first month, so I made him a bracelet out of embroidery floss, with a different color in it for each member of his family. Every time we would wave goodbye at drop of, I would watch him touching the bracelet fondly, it seemed to be comforting to him--he stopped crying after that.”*

*“My older child cried every day at Kindergarten drop-off for over a month (felt like a year!), and we made a locket that had our family's picture for her to look at when she felt sad.”*

- "The Kissing Hand" by Audrey Penn is a great book that talks about a Mom's love for her baby when they have to be apart. She kisses his hand and he can always feel the imprint of her love when he has to go to school.
- Sometimes, crying is a part of a child's adjusting to their new school routine. Even though it might feel excruciating in the moment, 1) your child will most likely stop crying shortly after entering their classroom and 2) the crying will lessen with time! And you have the support of families who totally get it!

## Communicating and partnering with your child's teacher

- Don't hesitate to ask your Kindergarten teacher for their thoughts. They are amazing with the kids and have probably seen just about everything at least once in their many years of experience.
- If something does not seem right, talk to the teachers first. They have the most experience with your child directly and with the whole experience of Kindergarten. And they have the power to enact change.

*"Listen to others but do what is right for you and your family. Everyone comes into this experience from such different backgrounds. We all want our kids to be happy and succeed, but trust your instincts when making decisions about teachers, drop off, after school care, volunteering, etc. because you know your child best."*

## Community and the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

- Reach out and meet your fellow Kindergarten class families. Get to school a little early so your kids can play with their classmates in the Kindergarten playground and you can get to know the parents. At some point, room reps or your child's teacher will assemble a contact list for your class. Use it to set up play dates and "Moms' Night Out".
- Let your child's teacher know you're interested in volunteering in the classroom, and be sure to add your name to the sign-up sheets. It's fun to see the Kindergarteners in their class and kids love to see their parents helping out!
- Go to PTO meetings to stay updated on what's going on at Clifford, and get to know more parents and teachers. The PTO typically meets once a month, on Thursdays, at 7pm in the Clifford Library. For more information, visit <http://cliffordschoolpto.org/about-us!>

*"Many parents want to volunteer but are not sure how. Go to a PTO meeting--kids can come too. Opportunities will present themselves and soon you'll have to turn down offers to help! You'll meet other parents like yourselves who want Clifford to be a great school. Other parents are a great source of knowledge and support."*

*“It is a great way to meet other parents and learn more information about the school. I feel it has been a nice way to meet parents with older kids so I have a better understanding of what to expect in the coming years.”*

### **Have fun and enjoy the school year**

- Savor the milestones and enjoy watching your Kindergartener learn! It truly does go by quick.
- After they get their bearings, have your child give you a school tour! They'll probably know where everything is before you do!
- Attend the fun social events, open houses, science fairs, and fundraisers that occur throughout the year. Before you know it, your child will be filled with school pride and will enjoy being a part of the community! We hope you will enjoy it too!

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**What if my child is late for school?** If your child is late, you'll need to get a tardy slip from the office before your child goes to their classroom. It is extremely important for children to arrive to school on time. It does interrupt the classroom learning when students arrive late to school.

**What if I need to pick my child up early from school?** If you need to pick your child up early, you must go to the office and sign out your child using the Sign Out sheet. Wait at the office. The office staff will call your teacher's room, and your child will come to you.

**What if my child has a medical prescription--Rx or otherwise--that needs to be administered during school hours?** Students may not take or carry any medication-including over-the-counter medication-on school grounds. All medication needing to be taken during school hours must be brought to the Clifford School office and administered by school personnel. "Medication" includes but is not limited to cough syrup, aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) and acetaminophen (Tylenol). All medication must be registered by parents and kept in the office. Medication must be accompanied by a doctor's note indicating dosage and instructions. Do not give medication to your student(s) to deliver to the office. Inhalers and Epi-pens that need to be carried by students at all times must be registered by parents with the District nurse in the Clifford School office. No student may give out any medication, including over-the-counter medicine.

**What if my child is sick?** If your child is sick, be sure to call the office in the morning and let them know.

**In case of an emergency, how can I contact my child?** You may call the office or depending on the teacher, you may send an email to your child's teacher. Please do not call your child on their cell phone as they are not allowed to be using it during school hours.

**What happens if my child gets hurt during school hours?** If your child gets hurt and must be attended by the nurse or office, staff will contact the parent or guardian, and explain the injury. You may also be asked to pick up your child early if the injury requires it.

**Can my child hang around the school after classes are dismissed if I cannot pick them up right away?** Be sure to pick your child up as soon as class is dismissed, as there is no after-school supervision on the school campus after class hours.

**What is the earliest I can drop my child off at school in the morning?** Children may not be dropped off at school any earlier than 8:00AM as there is no supervision before that time.

**What are the playground rules?** The kindergarten playground is used by the kindergarten classes only. All kids are welcome at the main playground. Teachers will explain the rules to the children.

**How do I find out about school events and activities?** Visit [www.cliffordschoolpto.org](http://www.cliffordschoolpto.org). In addition, check your child's folder on a daily basis for any communications from the school, your child's teacher, and the PTO. You may also subscribe to the Clifford PTO email blast distribution list: To sign up, visit [CliffordSchoolPTO.org](http://CliffordSchoolPTO.org), select **About Us**, and choose **Email Blast** and complete the required fields. Email addresses are not shared with anyone and the email blast is for school business only.

**How can I get a child or parent's phone number?** The Clifford directory is the best way to locate phone numbers /addresses of other Clifford families. Teachers and school administrators cannot provide phone numbers of other Clifford families.

**What if my child is absent?** The School District gets paid by the State of CA for each student who comes to class each day. The attendance is taken first thing in the morning. Please have your child in class on time. If your child needs to be absent some part of the day, it is better from a financial standpoint if the child is absent in the afternoon since the District will still get paid for the child's attendance if they are there when roll call is taken. Also, if you are gone on vacation for 5 days or more, you may apply for independent study so your child will keep up on their studies and not be considered absent from school and the District will get paid by the State.

**What do I do if I am on campus during school hours?** All visitors to Clifford must first check in with the office; visitors will be issued a visitor pass. Regular classroom volunteers will also be required to wear a Volunteer badge/sticker each time they are on campus. This system is in place to help keep our school community safe.

## CLIFFORD SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE

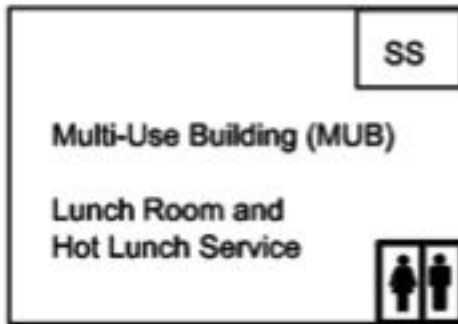
*Note: Please check with the Clifford School office in the event of schedule updates.*

	Instruction Begins	Recess	Lunch	Recess	Dismissal
<b>K</b> <i>Short day</i>	8:15/9:00 8:15/ 8:15	9:45-10:00 9:45-10:00	11:00-11:35 11:00-11:35		1:05/1:50 12:30
<b>1-2</b> <i>Short day</i>	8:15 8:15	9:30-9:50 9:30-9:50	11:30-12:15 11:30-12:10	1:30-1:40 ---	2:25 1:30
<b>3</b> <i>Short day</i>	8:15 8:15	9:30-9:50 9:30-9:50	11:30-12:15 11:30-12:10		2:25 1:30
<b>4</b> <i>Short day</i>	8:15 8:15	10:05-10:25 10:05-10:25	11:45-12:25 11:30-12:10		2:35 1:30
<b>5</b> <i>Short day</i>	8:15 8:15	10:05-10:25 10:05-10:25	12:23-1:03 12:13-12:53		2:35 1:30
<b>6-8</b> <i>Short day</i>	8:15 8:15	9:49-10:05 10:12-10:22	12:23-1:03 12:13-12:53		2:35 1:30

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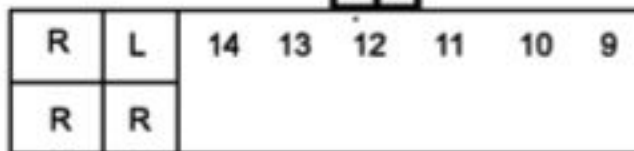
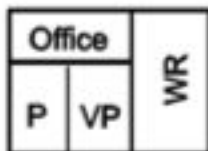
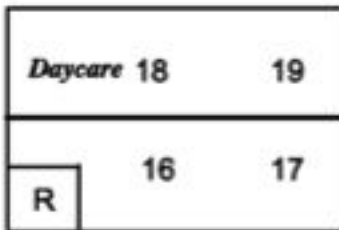
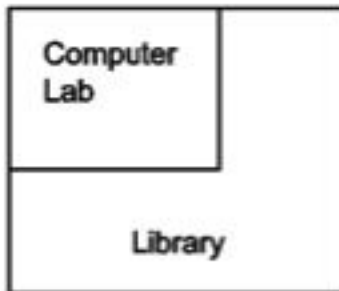
## SCHOOL MAP

# LOWER CAMPUS

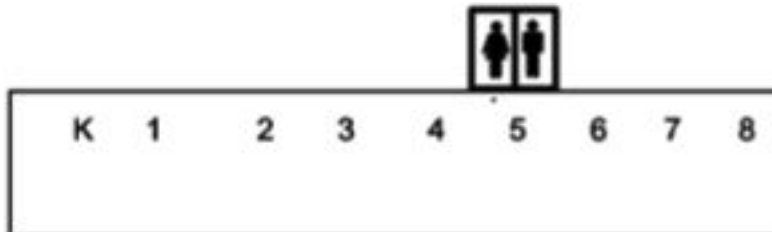


**LEGEND**

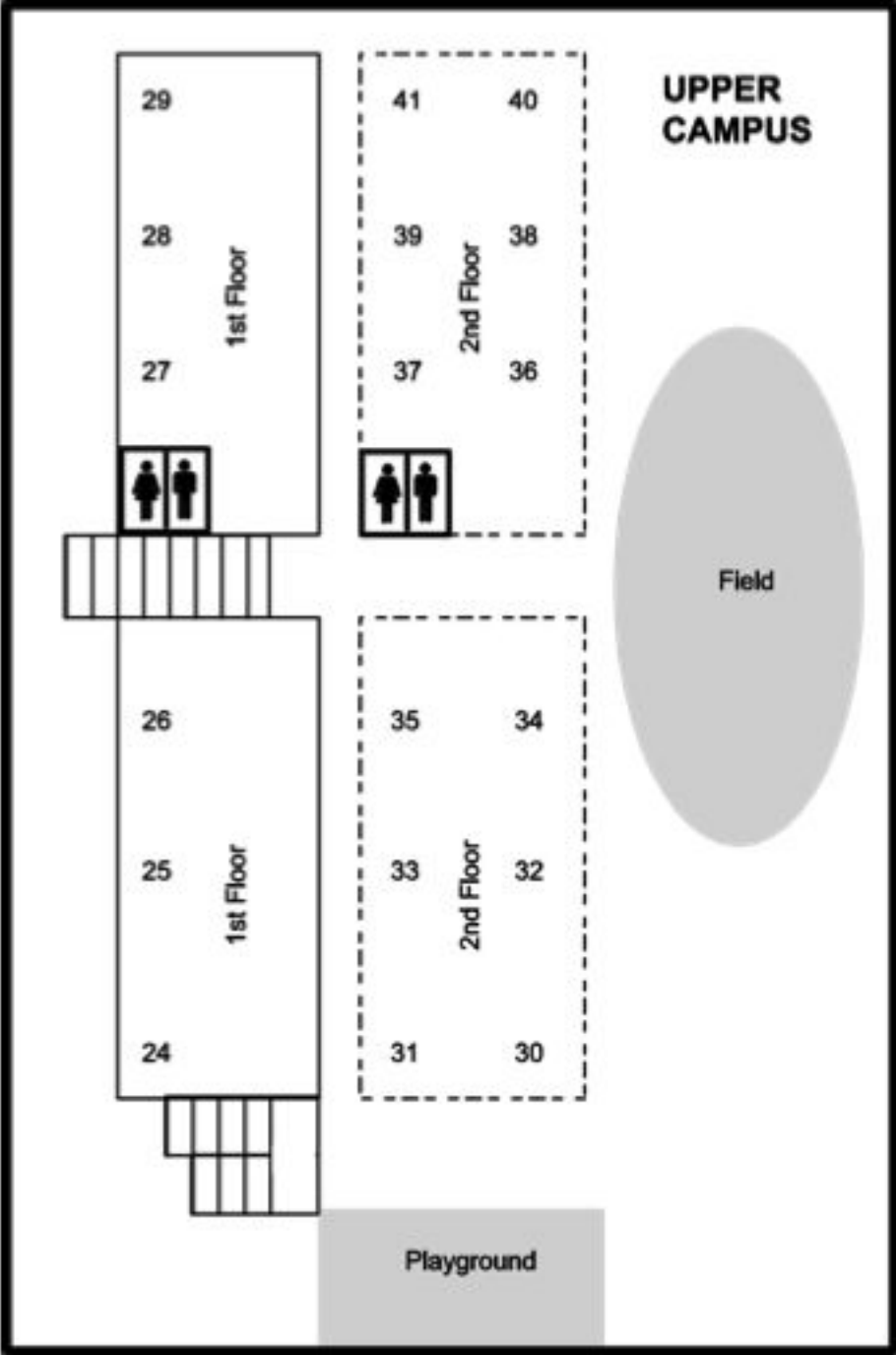
- R=Resource Rm
- A=Attendance Rm
- VP=Vice Principal
- P=Principal
- O=Office
- WR= Workroom
- SS=Snack Shack
- L=Teacher lounge



Kindergarten  
Playground



# SCHOOL MAP



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