

Dear Families,

I am writing to inform you of an incident that occurred this past Wednesday, January 7, 2026. After the conclusion of the YMCA before-school program and prior to the official start of our school day, one of our kindergarten students exited the school building and attempted to walk home. Fortunately, the student was noticed by one of our bus drivers, who immediately intervened, picked the student up, and returned him safely to school without injury.

While this incident was frightening for all involved, it also serves as an important reminder of how quickly situations can unfold and why strong safety systems are essential.

After meeting with the student and contacting the family, I immediately began reviewing how this incident occurred and what steps were needed to prevent it from happening again. I consulted with district leadership and community partners, including the YMCA and transportation staff, and worked closely with NMES staff to conduct a thorough review. I have remained in regular contact with the student's family throughout this process.

Student safety is non-negotiable. We take the safety of every child very seriously. As a result of this incident, we have reflected on and revised some procedures:

- Adjusted morning arrival duties, including staff locations
- Increased supervision during transition times
- Improved communication by sharing morning YMCA attendance with the main office
- Reinforced expectations with students that they should never leave the building without an adult

In addition, we will be:

- Reviewing and revising procedures with staff
- Providing training for staff and community partners, including the YMCA
- Continuing ongoing monitoring of all safety procedures

Lastly, I want to share a reflection with our families. When discussing frightening events, we often focus not only on what happened, but also on the helpers, because there are always helpers. While I have shared the facts above, I would also like to recognize one of those helpers. Ms. Dana, the driver of Bus 31, acted swiftly and without hesitation to ensure this student's safety. Her actions that morning made a critical difference, and we are incredibly grateful for her care and professionalism.

As always, if you have any questions or would like to discuss our safety plans and procedures further, please do not hesitate to reach out to schedule a meeting.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership.

Sincerely,
Krissy Chase, Principal