



Parent-Student Handbook
2025-2026

**St. Teresa Regional School
27 E. Evesham Road
Runnemede, NJ 08078**

**Parent-Student Handbook
2025-2026**

School Administration

Pastor: Rev. Robert Sinatra, JCL
Principal: Sister Santa Teresa Borzillo, IHM
Secretary: Mrs. Mariane Rodgers
Advancement: Mrs. Jayna Dorris and Mrs. Suzanne Bayer

Important Phone Numbers

School: 856-939-0333
School Advancement Office: 856-939-1207
Nurse: 856-939-0850
Parish Business Office: 856-939-1681

School Website: www.stteresaschool.org

Facebook page: St. Teresa Regional School
St. Teresa Regional HSA

MISSION STATEMENT

Fostering a unique partnership with families and dedicated faculty,
St. Teresa Regional School, a Pre-K through Grade 8 Catholic
educational institution strives to empower students
to know themselves as created and loved by God.
Forming minds and hearts for Leadership and Service
we achieve academic excellence, spiritual development
and individual responsibility in a safe and nurturing environment.

INTRODUCTION

Catholic schools serve a vital role in the Church's mission of providing young people with a strong formation in the Faith; they have a particular goal in helping Catholic children and young people grow in faithfulness and apostolic zeal. St. Teresa Regional School is open to all who wish to learn in a Catholic environment. By our works and example, we evangelize our students, their families, and the broader school community. Since humankind is created in the image and likeness of God, all human activity is to image His likeness and is to be undertaken in an honest and human way, always expressing the will of the Creator. Such activities include work, sports, hobbies, social interactions and interpersonal relationships. Catholic schools, like all human activity in which the Church participates, must reflect the faith which the Church has received from her divine founder.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

As a community whose primary mission is the teaching of the Faith, St. Teresa Regional School maintains an environment that is true to the teachings of the Church, and it is important that parents/guardians understand and accept this. By choosing a Catholic school, parents/guardians recognize that they are enrolling their children in a school environment that is shaped by the teachings of the Catholic church and governed according to those religious beliefs. Parents/guardians must accept that certain standards of behavior and comportment are expected and agree to support these standards and the mission of the school. If parents/guardians or students oppose Church teaching publicly, or in a way that disrupts or interferes with the teaching mission of the Church, they will be engaged pastorally to resolve the differences by explaining the teaching and the reasons for the teaching and kindly encouraging the parent/guardian or student to respect such teaching. Parents/guardians are advised that continued opposition may result in disenrollment of the student from the school.

HUMAN SEXUALITY

The Catholic Church teaches, "By creating the human being man and woman, God gives personal dignity equally to the one and the other. Each of them, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept [his or her] sexual identity." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2393). St. Teresa Regional School strives to be welcoming, respectful, and sensitive to each student's unique needs, while always being clear about Church teachings. Because the mission of a Catholic school is to form students in the Faith, we must always be true to the teachings of that Faith, even – indeed especially – when those teachings do not suit society's currently-popular views. Some accommodations to address particular needs may be advisable and possible, but a Catholic school cannot provide accommodations when doing so would in any way compromise the teachings of the Church or introduce confusion about its teachings.

AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

At our school, the principal is responsible for making sure that all rules and policies in this handbook are understood and followed in a way that supports the well-being of every student. The principal may use their judgment to apply these rules as needed in different situations.

From time to time, school policies and procedures may need to be updated. If any changes are made, we will do our best to share them with families as soon as possible.

We appreciate your partnership in helping create a safe, supportive, and positive learning environment for all students.

ST. TERESA REGIONAL SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

St. Teresa Regional School follows the educational policies set forth from the Office of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Camden and the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The philosophy of St. Teresa Regional School is rooted in the pastoral message on Catholic Education, To Teach as Jesus Did. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops state:

“The educational mission of the Church is an integral ministry embracing three interlocking dimensions: the message revealed by God which the Church proclaims, fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit and service to the Christian community and the entire community.”

Beliefs

- We believe that religious instruction in St. Teresa School is the underlying reality in which the students’ experiences in worship, learning, and living achieve coherence and meaning.
- We believe that all students are children of God. Therefore, students are counseled to respect others and exhibit concern and compassion through the use of good manners, affording each other their rightful dignity in all circumstances.

- We believe the administration and faculty seek to provide a program that is spiritually and academically strong so that students are empowered to share their gifts and talents with a sense of responsibility for service of God and neighbor.
- We believe the review and development of curriculum is an ongoing process that requires the cooperation of classroom teachers, coordinators and administration to act in conjunction with the guidelines set forth by the office of Catholic Schools of the Camden Diocese.
- We believe that the educational practices and tools to facilitate learning include an integration of language arts across the curriculum as well as multimedia and technological resources with cooperative learning experiences in all curriculum areas.
- We believe that both formal and informal evaluations serve to assist teachers in ascertaining student mastery of concepts, the need for remediation, accommodations and/or modifications.
- We believe parents are the primary educators of children and share in the responsibility and coordination of efforts with the faculty to provide a safe environment encouraging a love for learning and the nurturing of self-esteem in children.
- We believe that weekly class participation in the Holy Eucharist fosters students' growth as members of the Catholic Christian community ready to live out the call of Jesus to serve others.
- We believe that the whole child is developed spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially and physically by the faith community of school and parish in a safe and loving environment. To this end every effort is made to help students acquire skills, virtues and habits of heart and mind necessary for effective leadership and service.

**The goal of St. Teresa Regional School
is to educate children
for
Leadership and Service.
The strategy to accomplish the task is RACE:**

**RACE to Achieve
Responsibility
Academic Excellence
Catholic Identity
Empowerment**

**“Do you not know that the runners in the stadium
all run in the race,
but only one wins the prize?
Run so as to win.**

**Every athlete exercises discipline in every way.
They do it to win a perishable crown,
but we an imperishable one.”
1 Corinthians 9: 24-25**

Child and Youth Protection

All school employees, coaches, and adult volunteers are required to follow the Child and Youth Protection policies set by the Diocese of Camden’s Office of Child and Youth Protection. This includes completing background checks and mandatory Safe Environment training. These steps are taken to help ensure a safe and secure environment for all students.

Absence

Parents are asked to call the nurse’s office (856-939-0850) before 8:30 AM. The parents must state the student’s name, grade and reason for absence. When returning to school, the student must bring a note stating dates and reason for absence. Students absent for three days, or more are required to present a doctor’s note upon their return. There are no excused absences.

Homework assignments may be retrieved by a parent on the day of absence after 2:45 PM. Books and assignments will be available on the bookcase in the main school entrance.

After 10 cumulative days of unexcused absence, the principal will send a written notice to the parents/guardians and request a response.

After 18 cumulative days of unexcused absence, the principal will hold a conference, either in person or on phone with the parents/guardians to discuss corrective measures.

If absenteeism continues the possibility of student retention or withdrawal may occur.

Students who are not present in school or leave early because of illness may not participate in after-school or evening events that day, including sports.

Attendance

The school day begins with prayers at 7:55 AM each morning and extends to 2:30 PM. Early dismissal days end at (Noon) 12:00 p.m. Regular and punctual attendance contributes to sound achievement in every student. Parents are urged to anticipate morning traffic and make every effort to have their children present and on time daily.

Academic Policies

Preparation for Class

The student is responsible for completing all class assignments and homework on time. Homework, projects, etc. are not optional. They are requirements which enable the students to demonstrate comprehension, application of acquired skills, as well as independence and responsibility in the learning process.

Students' progress is monitored daily through teacher observation. Copybooks and assignments of any nature are expected to exhibit neatness and completeness of work. Attitude in class, respectful participation, and multiple forms of assessment are part of the overall report card grade.

Students are required to use copybooks properly. They may not tear pages from copybooks, skip pages, or use his/her copybooks for a drawing or scribbling pad. All book covers, pencil cases and other school materials are to be free of any kind of writing or markings. Torn out pages should never be submitted as a final piece of work to the teacher.

Class Participation

Students are expected to:

- give attention and respect to the teacher at all times including "specials" teachers
- show respect and concern for other students by taking turns and listening politely to others
- actively participate in class by attentiveness and responding orally or in writing as circumstances dictate
- refrain from disturbing the class in any inappropriate manner

Homework

The objective of homework is the extension and support of learning beyond class time. Homework includes both written and study assignments in grades K through 8.

Homework may also include having parents see and sign test papers and other school communications. Incomplete homework assignments or lateness in assignments will ultimately affect the student's report card grade. *Parents share the responsibility for homework with the students.*

All classroom teachers post homework on the board daily or on homework sheets in the primary grades. Homework is also posted on the class pages of the website along with the rubrics and timeline for every project at each grade level. This procedure is in place to assist parents in their responsibility to check that the work is completed in a timely manner. Parents and teachers share the responsibility to be in communication whenever tests or schoolwork is significantly and/or repeatedly lacking in achievement.

Homework Policy

Parents are responsible to make sure students comply with implementation of study skills appropriate for their grade level.

Grades K, 1, 2 – The teacher will make parents aware when homework assignments have been missed. Parent-Teacher conference will follow if the situation is not improved. As children in the primary grades are dependent on the adults in their life to support them in the formation of good study habits, parents/guardians are considered the responsible party to help children be prepared for class each day.

Grades 3, 4 – The teacher will make parents aware when homework assignments have been missed. It is the parent's responsibility to check the online assignments and assignment book to monitor the necessary attention needed for academic progress. Parent-Teacher conference will follow if the situation is not improved. While children at this age should be learning some independence in their study skills, parental supervision and guidance is still quite necessary. Continuous neglect of homework or lack of preparedness for class will necessitate a parent-teacher conference as soon as possible to address the issue.

Grades 5, 6, 7, 8 - Students in these grades experience a departmental structure (three teachers) for instruction. Parents are responsible for checking the homework assignment book nightly and to monitor students if there is need of additional direction for their child to learn to be responsible for their homework. Students at this level are required to make study cards for most curriculum areas to enhance their study skills. Outlining as a study tool is also introduced at this level.

Recommended homework times: Gr. 1-2: 20-30 minutes; Gr. 3-4: 30-45 minutes; Gr. 5-6: 45-60 minutes; Gr. 7-8: 60-90 minutes - Time allotment includes "study" time which is particularly important for success. Parents are responsible to see that children study and review each night. Parents are requested not to count on the after-school program as a place for children to complete their homework.

If a student fails a major subject for the year, he/she will be required to attend an approved summer program for reinforcement of skills.

Accident / Illness at School

Accidents or unusual illness occurring in school are reported immediately to the principal, nurse or school office personnel. When a student becomes ill or has an accident, the parent is contacted. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be called. No medicine of any kind, including aspirin, may be given to the student without written permission of the parent. Students may not carry medicine in their schoolbags. These should be taken to the nurse or the office for safekeeping. Only basic first aid may be administered to the student while in school.

Admissions

St. Teresa School admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all of the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs and athletic and other school-administered programs. St. Teresa School endeavors to accommodate students with special needs as the school's resources and capabilities reasonably permit. The school reserves the right to decline admission or impose reasonable conditions of attendance when circumstances indicate a necessary deviation from written policy. Students will be on a probationary period for the first year.

Children must be 5 by September 30th to be admitted to Kindergarten. First grade children must be 6 by September 30th.

After School Clubs

Children are encouraged to participate in After School Clubs. Older students are encouraged to support the Clubs by their participation or assistance to parent or teacher moderators. All moderators must comply with Diocesan Safe Environment Guidelines. **Students who are not present in school or leave early because of illness may not participate in after-school or evening events that day, which includes sports.**

Before / After Care Program

Children may attend the Before School program	6:30-7:30	\$5.00/day
Children may attend the After School program	2:30-5:30	\$15.00 day/ per student

Parents will register (\$25.00) their children at the beginning of the year so that important contact and health information is available when the need arises for use of the service.

Birthday celebrations

Parents may send a small store wrapped treat for the class to celebrate a child's birthday. STRS is a peanut friendly school. **Please avoid any snacks/treats with nuts of any kind.** Birthday celebrations will take place during snack time at recess. Parents are asked to inform the teacher before a treat is sent to school.

STRS is a peanut friendly school. Students with this or other food allergies will take snack and lunch in a safe space. Parents are asked to be specific with directions for the classroom teacher as well as the nurse in these cases.

Books and Materials

Every student must carry his/her books to and from school in a suitable book bag. All books must be covered. Copybooks are to be covered in clear contact paper. All covers and belongings must be neat and clean and free of inappropriate material. Absolutely no drawing on the inside or outside of textbooks or covers is permitted. Books, copybooks, pencil cases, and materials are to be properly kept and identified with a student's name and grade. All school supplies should be kept in good order and free of any drawings or words added by students. Individual student desks are to be in good order at the close of each day.

Cell Phones (and electronic devices)

Cell phones are permitted only under certain conditions.

- **Cell phones must be turned off during the school day and stored in a location determined by the teacher.**
- **No "Smart", Apple watches, Fit Bits or wrist devices are permitted in school.**
- **They may not be used at any time during the school day or after school or on school property without permission.**
- **Cell phones may not be used to take pictures at any time on school property, on field trips or during any school activity.**
- **Harassment or threatening of individuals via the cell phone is prohibited.**
- **Cell phones may not be used for playing games, accessing the Internet or email, gambling, texting, sexting or making purchases of any kind.**
- **A cell phone which rings during the school day or is out of the student's schoolbag will be taken by the teacher, placed in an envelope and given to the principal. The student is responsible for informing the parents that the principal has the phone. The parent may call the principal to set an appointment to retrieve the phone. The student should accompany the parent to reclaim the phone.**
- **No electronic devices may be brought from home.**

Chromebooks

- **Chrome Books issued by the school are for academic purposes. Games may not be played on the Chromebook unless sanctioned by the teacher.**
- **Chromebooks are to be in a case at all times when not in use.**

- **It is the responsibility of the student to have the Chromebook charged each day.**
- **If a Chromebook is forgotten, the student may not call home for it.**
- **Mishandling of a Chromebook or any damage will be the responsibility of the student and parent. If a Chromebook can be fixed, the parents will be charged the cost. If the Chromebook cannot be repaired, the student/parent will be responsible for its cost.**
- **Students may not attempt to circumvent system security, other students' devices, blocked sites or to bypass software protections.**

Due to the evolving nature of technology, we reserve the right to amend or supplement these policies at any time without notice.

Technology Policy

Purpose

Technology is a valuable educational tool. St. Teresa School is committed to teach students, faculty, administrators, staff, and school community to work and to learn effectively with technology and to ensure the responsible use of these tools.

Goal

A goal of STRS is to prepare the students for life in the global, digital community. To this end the school will:

- provide a variety of technology-based tools
- teach technology skills appropriate for grade level
- integrate technology with curriculum to enhance teaching and learning
- encourage critical thinking and problem solving
- facilitate evaluation and synthesis of information
- encourage ethical practices and provide education for internet safety

Responsibility of Users

St. Teresa School will make every effort to provide a safe environment for learning in the digital age. Those who participate in the use of technology at STRS (students and faculty) are called to responsible use of equipment with respect for the property and privacy of others in every way.

Students (grades 3 through 8) sign an *Acceptable Use Policy* for the proper use of technology within the school setting.

Students in grades 3-8 will have use of a school issued Chrome book. The purpose of the device is to assist students to learn how to use an online textbook. Any student who misuses the Chrome book in any way will relinquish the privilege. These devices may be checked without warning at any time since they are the property of the school.

Parents are urged to monitor the use of all forms of technology by their children at home. Disproportionate use of video games, X-Box, etc. will clearly have an impact on a student's grades and overall ability for a student's personal best in academic excellence. As responsible primary educators of their children, parents are asked to monitor and create some balance of the student's study time with other forms of recreation.

Change of Names, Addresses, and Phone numbers

It is important that parents inform the school office and the homeroom teacher if there is a change in address and/or telephone/cell number. This includes the change of emergency contact numbers.

Parents will need to sign a waiver giving permission to give out address, phone numbers and email addresses to class ambassadors.

Chewing Gum

Students may not chew gum at any time in the school building, school yard, church, or on the grounds of Holy Child Parish.

Closing Exercises

Participation in closing exercises is a privilege, not a right. The school has the right to deny any student from participating in closing exercises if, in the view of the Principal or Pastor, the student's conduct, academic or disciplinary record and outstanding tuition indicates that the privilege should not be extended.

Communication

Several forms of communication exist at St. Teresa School to help keep parents informed of student progress, policies, activities and coming events. These include Parent/Student Handbook, yearly calendar, monthly calendar, Class Pages on website, Quarterly academic warnings, RenWeb (online marks and quarterly report cards,) Parent-Teacher Conferences, Progress Reports, Home and School meetings, Global Connect Messaging System and e-mail reminders. Parents are welcome to contact teachers or administration via email or phone message with concerns. Return communication will be given within 24 hours.

Conduct

Code of Conduct

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of the whole person. The Code of Conduct is based on the Gospel message of Jesus. Growth in self-discipline, a responsibility for Catholic moral values and a loving respect for the rights of all persons is encouraged and nourished by the Code of Conduct. To achieve these ends parents/guardians, faculty, and student work together to create a Catholic school environment. These basic components include:

- a. Teachers have a right to teach. No student will stop the teacher from teaching.
- b. Students have a right to learn. No student will stop another student from learning.

Based upon the Catholic moral values and loving respect for others taught by Jesus, students:

- a. Will be honest and committed to integrity.
- b. Will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers and adults.
- c. Will refrain from harassment of any kind.
- d. Will use appropriate language.
- e. Will speak respectfully to and about others.
- f. Will complete all assignments and participate fully in class.
- g. Will respect all school and personal property
- h. Will refrain from any deliberate disruption in the school.
- i. Will adhere to the school's cell phone policy.
- j. Will comply with the Internet Responsible Use Policy.
- k. Will demonstrate good sportsmanship when engaged in all school-co-sponsored and extracurricular activities.
- l. Will be present for all required activities unless officially excused by the administration.
- m. Will adhere to the dress code (see Dress Code)
- n. Will not give or receive unauthorized assistance on tests, quizzes assignments.
- o. Will not leave school grounds during the school day for any reason without permission from the principal/administration.
- p. Will not bring to school, nor possess at school, any real or toy knives, guns, (or any facsimile thereof), sharp objects that may be used as a weapon, matches, lighters, sparklers, laser devices, or any facsimile thereof. It is understood if this term is violated, suspension, or expulsion may result.

Threats and Safety Concerns

The safety and well-being of all students is our top priority. If the principal receives a report from a student, teacher, staff member, or parent indicating that a student may be in possession of a weapon or has made a threat of harm—including threats of violence—the principal may notify local law enforcement in accordance with the school's *Memorandum of Agreement with Law Enforcement*.

Depending on the situation, the principal may also require the student to undergo a psychological or psychiatric evaluation by a licensed mental health professional. During this time, the student will not be permitted to attend school or participate in any

extracurricular activities until all police involvement is concluded and, if needed, the student has been evaluated.

Before the student may return, the school must receive a written statement from a licensed mental health professional confirming that the student does not pose a threat to self or others.

Any student found to be in possession of a weapon or who has made a serious threat will face disciplinary consequences, which may include suspension or expulsion.

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

God created each person in His image and likeness; therefore, each student is expected to grow in wisdom, maturity, and grace. These qualities are evidenced by self-discipline, which shows respect toward all charged with authority over them and toward their fellow students. It is also shown in the maturity to make appropriate choices and to accept the consequences of those choices.

Demerits will be issued after verbal warnings and the Demerit Slip will serve as a communication to both student and parent that a student's conduct is unacceptable and needs to be improved. The Demerit Slip will be signed by the parent and student and returned to the homeroom teacher the next school day after the demerit has been awarded.

Demerits will be awarded for, but not limited to, the following:

Accumulation of three demerits will warrant a detention. Three detentions will warrant a suspension. Three suspensions may warrant permanent separation from the school community.

One Demerit

- a. Repeated lack of written homework
- b. Repeated lack of preparation for class
- c. Failure to return a parent notice
- d. Dress code violation after one warning
- e. Chewing gum
- f. Continual disruptive behavior in church, class, cafeteria, schoolyard, or other school function
- g. Doodling, drawing, scribbling on workbooks, copybooks, and textbooks

Two Demerits

- a. Disrespect towards authority
- b. Disrespect towards another student
- c. Use of inappropriate language (written or spoken)
- d. Possession of an unapproved electronic device
- e. Forgery
- f. Lying

Automatic Detention

- a. Blatant, public disrespect to faculty, staff or volunteers
- b. Deliberate disobedience to authority
- c. Cheating, including plagiarism
- d. Fighting
- e. Bullying/harassment (defined as continual picking on, calling of names, physical contact and/or intimidation)
- f. Unauthorized or inappropriate use of technology

SUSPENSION

Suspension may be imposed as determined by the principal/administration.

Once the principal/administration suspends a student, parents/guardians may be required to sign a behavioral contract in which they signify their understanding of the problem and agree to work with the school in correcting the situation.

The failure of the parents to execute the above referenced agreement shall preclude the student from returning to the regular instructional program. This policy applies to in-house and out-of-school suspensions.

A student is responsible to make-up all class work that was missed while on suspension. He/she will have one day for each day of suspension to make-up missed class and homework.

DETENTION

Detention will be scheduled by the awarding teacher and will last one hour, after school dismissal. Upon completion of detention, students will be released to their parent(s). Alternate release instructions must be pre-designated in writing.

EXPULSION

Expulsion may be resorted to when one or all the following are present:

- a. a serious infraction of school rules occurs.
- b. the student has demonstrated continuing disregard of school rules for which other means of discipline have proven ineffectual.
- c. the student's continued presence in the school is considered by school officials to be a serious hindrance to the safety or welfare of the school community.
- d. a parent/guardian repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students or displays disrespectful, disruptive, or harassing behavior toward teachers, school, or parish

If the principal/administration believes it necessary to expel a student, the principal/administration will notify the student and the student's parents about the student's action and provide them with an opportunity to respond before making any final decision on the matter.

Bullying

Bullying can be evidenced in three forms:

- Physical: includes hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing and taking personal belongings
- Verbal: includes taunting, malicious teasing, name-calling and making threats
- Psychological: involves spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships and engaging in social exclusion, extortion or intimidation

St. Teresa School mission statement reads that we “foster a unique partnership with families . . . to empower students to know themselves as created and loved by God.” The mission statement also calls each person involved with the school to individual responsibility to support a safe and nurturing environment in which students at every level can achieve their best academically and develop personally and spiritually. Therefore, bullying is seen as a grave offense to any student or teacher in the school.

Facts Regarding Bullying

- In every instance of bullying there is the bully, the victim and the witnesses.
- Bullying is harmful to the victim, to the bully and to the other children in the school.
- Bullying is a subtle form of violence which can lead to an explosive situation.
- Further examples of bullying
 - Teasing – name calling, insulting, or other behavior that would hurt another’s feelings or make them feel bad about themselves
 - Exclusion – starting rumors, telling others not to be friends with someone, or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends
 - Physical Bullying – pushing, slapping, grabbing, flicking, poking, pinching, gestures, tripping or other violations of personal space
 - Severe Physical Bullying – punching, kicking and similar behavior that could result in injury to others
 - Threat of serious violence – threats of using a weapon, or other conduct which should be immediately reported to the police
 - Harassment – racial, ethnic or sexual name-calling or other severe harassment

Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any intentional written, verbal or physical act, when the intentional written, verbal or physical act may

- physically harm a student or damage the student’s property; or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education; or
- is severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the classroom or school

Consequences for Bullying at St. Teresa School or at school-related functions

Consequences may include the following:

- Phone call to parents
- Loss of privilege (to be determined in consultation with teachers at that level)
- Office referral (student sent to office for reflection on action)
- Individual plan - outlining clear consequences for further incidents
- Suspension – in-school or out-of-school (determined by principal)
- Expulsion – determined by principal, pastor and diocesan superintendent
- Police Contact – Police *must* be contacted when students break the law.

New Jersey State law indicates that appropriate action in dealing with bullying may involve law enforcement.

Consequences will be given in an age-appropriate manner for students who bully others.

Social Media and Bullying

Parents are asked to take responsibility to monitor, to the best of their ability, their child's use of technology in social networking. School bullying incidents often occur as a result of what happens through texting, Facebook, Instagram, etc. Bullying in school is also fueled by inappropriate and irresponsible use of such media in reaction to an incident that happens outside school.

The principal may report allegations of cyber-bullying to law enforcement authorities. In the event that an in-school investigation results in cyber-bullying committed by a St. Teresa student using technology tools away from school grounds, the principal may report the investigation to local law enforcement.

Students who use electronic devices of any kind in an inappropriate manner while riding a field trip bus or while attending any school related function (sports events, dances, etc.) are liable for reprimand and appropriate consequences. Acts of bullying or cyber bullying that take place outside of school and are brought into the school will be referred to law enforcement for investigation.

New Jersey State Law clearly indicates that every student has the right to a safe environment while attending school for the purpose of education. Behaviors which impede that safe environment must be changed. An Acceptable Use of Technology policy is signed by students each year in St. Teresa Regional School (grades 3-8). Those who choose to violate the signed agreement whether in school or out of school will be liable for consequences which may range from intervention and/or suspension to expulsion.

Students who retaliate against any other student or teacher who report an act of bullying or cyber-bullying will receive consequences and remedial action as determined by the Pastor and Principal in consultation with the grade level teacher.

Reporting Bullying

Every student and staff member has the responsibility to report acts of bullying.

The child who is bullied:

- Report the incident to a teacher
- Report the incident to your parent
- Answer questions honestly

The witness:

- Report what you see or hear to the teacher or the principal
- Do not join in the bullying

The teachers or staff member receiving report:

- Take all reports seriously
- Listen to the child
- Validate the child's feelings
- Report the incident to the principal or designee

False Reporting

Any student who issues a false report regarding bullying by another child will receive consequences appropriate to the action.

Expulsion from St. Teresa Regional School under any circumstances will be the joint decision of Pastor, Principal and Diocesan Superintendent following due process.

Consequences and Confidentiality

Sometimes the school's response to an incident is dictated by state law and/or diocesan policy. In some cases, diocesan legal counsel advises the administration to determine consequences or actions to be taken. At all times the administration will seek a solution that will keep all students safe and at the same time help those who are at the source of difficulty to learn to make better choices. Parents should be aware that full disclosure regarding details of investigations as well as resolutions is not always possible. Parents are asked to respect the process.

Custodial Agreements and Student Access

It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to present the school with a notarized copy of the court order determining custody agreements. The copy will be kept in a confidential file. The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Thus, non-custodial parents will be given access to academic records and to information regarding the academic progress of their children, unless there is a court order specifically stating that a non-custodial parent is denied access to that information.

Detention

Disciplinary procedures for Kindergarten through grade 8 are generally handled on an individual basis by the classroom teacher. After school detention will be issued if warranted or student has received 3 demerits.

Dress Code

Students are expected to be neatly groomed and in school uniform at all times. Neatness and cleanliness in personal attire are part of a child's education for life and the responsibility of parents and guardians. The uniform shall be worn in the way it is intended to be worn. Full uniform attire is available at Flynn & O'Hara Uniforms in Cherry Hill. Certain pieces of the uniform may be purchased at alternate locations provided the dress code is maintained. The administration reserves the right to ask about non-compliance in uniform if a note from the parents has not been presented.

- **Hair is to be neat with only a *simple hair band*.**
- **No fad haircuts.**
- **Hair is not to be dyed or streaked.**
- **No jewelry is worn in school except a small cross on thin chain or a medal of Our Lady. Boys are included in this rule.**
- **There is to be no jewelry worn on Gym Day, which is Thursday.**
- **Girls may not wear make-up or any decoration for fingernails. One warning will be given to a student who has nail polish or fake nails on. If it is not removed, a demerit will be issued.**
- **Earrings must be smaller than the earlobe and not dangling or hoops. Only one pair of earrings is permitted.**
- **Earrings are not permitted on any boy at any time.**
- **Boys must wear dress socks and not athletic socks.**
- **All boys must have neatly combed and trimmed hair that is clean and always worn above the collar. Bangs may not cover the eyebrows. Trendy designs or shave cuts are not permitted. The only visible line in a haircut for boys should be the actual hairline or part.**
- **For the Gym Uniform: Sneakers (with minimal color), no high tops, light ups or slip-ons.**

All students wear the school uniform on all school days unless special permission is given.

Out of Uniform

If at any time during the year an exception in uniform is necessary, a courtesy note of explanation should be sent to the student's teacher who will forward it to the office. This note should indicate the expected date by which the uniform will be complete. If a note

is not received a student will receive a formal notice. If it continues, a demerit will be issued.

UNIFORMS ITEMS CAN BE

PURCHASED at *FLYNN & O'HARA* located: Garden State Pavilion

2240 W. Marlton Pike

Cherry Hill, NJ 080522

(856) 931-8838

Or by shopping online at www.flynnohara.com

FALL/WINTER

Pre-K BOYS & GIRLS

1. Sneakers
2. Khaki pull on pants
3. Long or short sleeve solid color golf shirt (Flynn & O'Hara)

These uniform pieces can also be found at Target, JC Penney, etc.

GIRLS-Grades K to 4

1. Red Plaid Drop-waist jumper (Flynn & O'Hara)
2. Option: black Lycra shorts under jumper to the knee
3. Short or long sleeve, white, Peter Pan collar blouse (Flynn & O'Hara)
4. Prescott Red cardigan (Flynn & O'Hara)
5. Black or Prescott Red Knee highs
6. Black MaryJane or Oxford Shoe* (Sneakers for Kinder) (Sneakers for Kinder— Velcro for those who cannot tie)



***All Kindergarten uniforms are the same as grades 1 to 4, however sneakers are permissible for Kindergarten with all uniforms.**

BOYS- Grades K to 6

1. Navy pants
2. White dress shirt
3. **STRS Plaid Tie (K-4)**
4. **Navy tie (5-6)**
5. STRS Logo Sweater or Vest
6. Black socks
7. Black school shoe
8. Black belt



GIRLS-Grades 5 and 6

1. Red Plaid wrap around kilt (Flynn & O'Hara)
2. Option: black Lycra shorts under kilt to the knee
3. Short or long sleeve, white, button-down collar blouse
4. Prescott Red cardigan or long sleeve Prescott Red sweater with logo or Prescott Red sweater vest with logo (Flynn & O'Hara)
5. Black or Prescott Red Knee highs
6. Black MaryJane or Oxford Shoe*



***All of the Pre-K uniform pieces can be purchased at Flynn & O'Hara, Target, JC Penney, Walmart, etc.**

Girls Grades 7 & 8

1. Navy blazers
2. Blouse-blur or white oxford
3. Grey wrap around kilt to the **knee**
4. Navy or black knee socks or tights
5. Sturdy black shoes

Boys Grades 7 & 8

1. Navy blazers
2. Dress shirt
3. **Gr. 7 Navy Tie**
4. **Gr. 8 Alternate Tie**
5. Grey dress pants, Grey shorts (summer)
6. Sturdy black shoes (In Summer: White sneakers or black school shoe)
7. White or Black ankle socks
8. Black belt

SPRING/ SUMMER

Pre-K BOYS & GIRLS

1. Sneakers
2. Khaki pull on shorts
3. Long or short sleeve solid color golf shirt

BOYS & GIRLS-Grades K to 6

1. Navy twill shorts
(Can also be found at Sears, Target, JCPenney, Old Navy, Walmart)
2. Short sleeve white or lt. blue golf shirt
with logo (Flynn & O'Hara)
3. Black belt
4. White socks
5. White sneakers or Black School Shoe



GIRLS- Grades 7-8

1. Short sleeve navy golf shirt with *STRS* logo
2. Grey wrap around kilt to the knee
3. Navy or black knee socks
4. White sneakers or black school shoe

BOYS- Grades 7-8

1. Short sleeve navy golf shirt with *STRS* logo
2. Grey dress pants, Grey shorts
3. White sneakers or black school shoe
4. White or Black ankle socks

5..Black belt

GYM UNIFORM BOYS & GIRLS-Grades K to 8

SPRING/ SUMMER

1. Royal blue nylon mesh shorts
2. Grey t-shirt with logo, STRS spirit wear, STRS sports jersey
3. White socks
4. Sneakers (with minimal color) no high tops, light ups or slip-ons



WINTER/ FALL

1. Royal blue sweatpants, STRS sweatpants
2. Grey t-shirt with logo, STRS spirit wear, or STRS sp
3. Royal blue sweatshirt with logo or STRS spirit wear
4. White socks
5. Sneakers (with minimal color) no high tops, light ups or slip-ons



Drug and Alcohol Possession / Use

A student who brings any unauthorized drug, alcohol, or any substance of that nature will automatically be suspended from school. Parents will be required to meet with the school administration regarding the situation. A decision will be made by the Pastor and the Principal as to whether the student will be readmitted to the school following the suspension for drug or alcohol possession or use.

In the state of New Jersey, incidents on school property involving any controlled dangerous substance, drug paraphernalia or the possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages by a minor is a police matter. These incidents will be handled accordingly.

Emergency closing

A telephone message will be sent to all families as well as information posted on the school website.

Field Trips

Teachers plan field trips that are educational and enjoyable. Students must have parent permission forms signed and fees paid. Students may be withheld from field trips due to consistent inappropriate behavior. Any student withheld from a field trip must report to school for the day.

Field trips are to be paid for in cash.

Grading

The Diocese of Camden has a uniform grading scale for all Diocesan Schools. The grading scale and marking code are as follows:

PreK-Kindergarten

C Consistently Observed
S Sometimes Observed
N Needs Practice & Support
N/A Not Assessed

Grades 1 and 2:

E Exceeding grade level expectations
G: Growth and meeting grade level
P Progressing toward level expectations
I Initial stages of development; needs help

Grades 3-8**Major Subjects:**

A+ 97-100
A 93-96
B+ 89-92
B 85-88
C+ 81-84
C 77-80
D+ 74-76
D 70-73
F Below 70

Minor Subjects:

E Exceeds
G Good
S Satisfactory
NI Needs
Improvement
U Unsatisfactory

Guidance

St. Teresa Regional School offers on-site counseling for students one day a week. The counselor sees students who request assistance and whose parents have signed a permission statement. This service is offered for short-term assistance. It does not answer the need for students who require long term counseling.

Harassment

St. Teresa School follows the Camden Diocesan Policy (514.1) prohibiting harassment, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual attention or remarks, requests for sexual favors or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination. It is behavior or words that may be repeated or be very offensive in a one-time incident. It is a behavior that will not be tolerated. Any student, parent or guardian who is found to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action up to and including dismissal of the student.

Types of Sexual Harassment:

- Physical Sexual Harassment – unwanted, sexually-oriented physical act, such as grabbing or touching someone, tearing or pulling at a person's clothing
- Verbal Sexual Harassment – offensive words and comments, spoken privately to a person or in front of them, such as, comments about body parts, sexual suggestions or threats, or sexual jokes, etc.
- Nonverbal Sexual Harassment – making obscene gestures, displaying obscene sexual material, passing obscene notes, etc.

Health Emergencies

In the event of a health emergency, the school will create and highlight any modifications that will be distributed to the school community. These changes must be followed by the school community.

Immunization Requirements

All students must have the immunizations required for school attendance by the State of New Jersey.

Medical Exemptions:

Medical Exemptions are allowed when a written statement is provided by the child's physician. This statement must explain that the required vaccine would be harmful to the child's health or poses a significant risk to their well-being. Medical exemptions are reviewed annually.

Religious Exemptions:

St. Teresa Regional School will consider requests for religious exemption from immunization if parents submit a written letter stating that their objection is a matter of informed conscience. The final decision regarding religious exemption will be made by the pastor.

Lateness

Punctuality is a life skill encouraged in St. Teresa School. Students are required to be present in the school by 7:55AM. Parents and students are asked to plan ahead to be on time for school. While weather and traffic are recognized issues of concern, parents who are aware of regular heavy traffic should make every effort to leave an appropriate amount of time to get children to school. Students are strongly urged to cooperate with morning procedures at home so that both student and parent will be on time for school and/or work.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parents are free to make appointments with teachers at any time through e-mail or a phone call to the school office. Kindergarten conferences are held twice a year. Parent calls to the office will be forwarded to the teacher. Teachers will respond as soon as possible within 24 hours. Parents should always speak with their child's teacher before

bringing the matter to the administration. Parents are requested to refrain from having conferences when they are in school to volunteer for an event or at dismissal time. The teacher's attention is focused on students during the day and at dismissal.

Security Drills (Fire drill / Lockdown)

STRS prepares students and staff for potential emergency situations. Students practice lockdown, shelter in place, fire and evacuation drills on a monthly rotating basis. Records are kept so that improvements can be made to the security of all on the premises. An annual report is submitted to the Office of Child and Youth Protection for Camden Diocese.

Sports Program

Students in STRS are encouraged to join the Sports Program which includes volleyball, basketball, track, cross country and cheerleading. **Parents must have all health documentation and fees paid before a child may participate in sports.** Students must maintain passing quarterly grades to play on teams. Students with a failure at any quarter will be suspended from sports until consistent academic improvement is demonstrated. **Students who are not present in school or leave early because of illness may not participate in after-school or evening events that day, including sports.**

Suspension

Suspensions are issued for infractions of a serious nature as determined by the school administration. The usual length of suspension is from one to three days. Suspension may be issued for repeated disrespect, stealing, leaving class or building without permission, defacing any part of school property or other serious matters. Following a suspension, parents and the student will be interviewed by the principal. A suspended student may not return to the school community until a parent meeting has been conducted, and probationary measures are in place to empower the student to regain his/her personal best in behavior and academic success.

Documentation will be kept regarding the infraction, suspension, parental interview, probationary measures and agreement to return.

Transfers

Parents who wish to transfer their child to another school must have all tuition paid to date. No academic or health records can be forwarded to the receiving school unless all financial obligations are paid.

Tuition

Tuition is paid through the FACTS Management program. Parents may choose the 5th, 10th or 20th day of the month on which their payment will be made directly from their account. Every effort is made to support parents in their desire for Catholic education for their child. Parents must act responsibly regarding tuition payments. Failure to pay tuition may ultimately result in dismissal from the school if parents do not respond to inquiries regarding tuition.

Vandalism

Vandalism of any kind is prohibited in St. Teresa School. All students are responsible to treat school materials, whether personal, school property, or church property with respect. Any student who vandalizes in any way will be suspended from school. The parents of the student may be asked to pay for damages caused by their child.

Violent/Threatening/Inappropriate Conduct

It is the intent of the school to provide an educational environment free from all forms of improper threats, intimidation, hostility, bullying and offensive and inappropriate behavior. Parents are encouraged to listen to their children in conversation with others and to speak with their children regarding threats, intimidation, hostility, bullying and offensive behavior directed at others. Any incidents of this nature will be dealt with according to school, diocesan and legal policies.

Volunteers

Volunteers must comply with Diocesan Safe Environment standards. Parent volunteers and other visitors are always welcome at St. Teresa School. All visitors and volunteers must sign in and out at the office. No parent may go to a classroom during the day. Those who bring forgotten items for children must leave the items in the office.

Weapons

Possession of any dangerous weapon or firearm (or the resemblance of such) will be cause for the administration to make immediate contact with the law enforcement. Each case will follow the legal procedures mandated by the state of New Jersey.

Partnership with Parents and Guardians

Parent and Guardian Expectations

At *St. Teresa Regional School*, we believe that a strong partnership between home and school is essential to the growth and success of each child. Parents and guardians are expected to support the mission and values of the school by modeling respectful behavior, engaging in constructive communication, and working in cooperation with school personnel.

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Express concerns or disagreements through the appropriate channels—beginning with the teacher or school administration—and avoid gossip, public criticism, or confrontational behavior.
- Use respectful and constructive dialogue when addressing school-related concerns. Inflammatory language, threats, intimidation, or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

- Cooperate with the school in its efforts to support students' spiritual, academic, social, and emotional development.
- Ensure that their children comply with all policies outlined in this handbook and support the school in all aspects of student life and programming.
- Attend parent meetings, conferences, and participate in school life as circumstances allow.
- Be truthful and timely in communication with school staff regarding attendance, academics, behavior, and other student matters.
- Follow all school safety procedures, including check-in/check-out protocols, parking guidelines, and visitor policies.
- Respect the physical boundaries and roles of faculty and staff. Parents may not enter classrooms, offices, or staff-only areas without permission.
- Never discipline another child on school property. All concerns involving students should be reported to appropriate school personnel.
- Use school communication tools, directories, and contact lists only for school-related purposes. School resources may not be used to distribute political, commercial, or unrelated materials.

Unacceptable Conduct

Behavior, communication (spoken, written, or digital—including social media), or actions by parents/guardians—or by anyone acting on their behalf—that are incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the school will not be tolerated. This includes conduct that is:

- Violent
- Abusive
- Recalcitrant
- Excessively negative
- Intimidating or harassing

If reasonable efforts to resolve such behavior are unsuccessful, the school may take appropriate action. This may include limiting the parent's access to school grounds and activities or, in serious cases, the disenrollment of the student.

Custody Arrangements

Parents and guardians are required to provide the school with all **official court documents** related to custody arrangements, parenting time, educational rights, or any restrictions.

These documents must be:

- **Current and certified by the court**
- **Submitted to the school office** at the time of enrollment or immediately upon any changes

If no legal documentation is provided, the school will assume that **both parents have equal rights** concerning the student.

While *St. Teresa Regional School* is committed to working with all families in a respectful and professional manner, the school **cannot mediate or become involved in custody disputes**. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to resolve such matters privately and through the appropriate legal channels.

The administration, faculty, and staff will follow only the **custody and access directives** as outlined in the **official documentation on file**. School personnel are not permitted to provide written statements or letters for use in legal proceedings unless they are formally subpoenaed.

Social Media Policy for Parents

To maintain a positive and respectful school environment, parents are expected to use social media responsibly in a way that reflects the values and mission of *St. Teresa Regional School*.

- **School Logos and Representation:** Parents may not use the school logo or present any social media post or page as an official communication of the school.
- **Appropriate Comments:** Parents are prohibited from posting comments on school-managed social media that are inappropriate. Examples include, but are not limited to: obscenities, foul language, spam, personal attacks, bullying, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, threats, insults, commercial solicitations, repetitive or fraudulent comments, irrelevant comments, morally objectionable content, or statements inconsistent with Catholic teaching.
- **School Authority:** The school reserves the sole right to edit or remove any comments on school-managed social media posts.
- **Respectful Communication:** Parents are expected to refrain from using personal communication channels—including online, mobile, and social media—to criticize, demean, or publicly disparage the school, its administration, faculty, staff, or students, or to sow discord or undermine the school’s Catholic mission and identity.

Consequences:

If attempts to resolve violations of this policy are not successful, the school may take appropriate action, including limiting the parent’s access to school grounds and activities or, in serious cases, the disenrollment of the student.

Audio/Video Recording by Parents

Non-staff use of cameras, video, or audio recording devices—including cell phone cameras and microphones—on school grounds during the school day is **prohibited without prior approval** from the school.

Violations of this policy may result in:

- Confiscation of the device
- Disciplinary action

Volunteer Requirements

Any adult who wishes to volunteer with St. Teresa Regional School in any capacity must sign the Disclosure and Authorization Form and give consent to the Diocese of Camden to conduct a background check. All adult volunteers must complete the Universal Fingerprint Form by IdentGo and be fingerprinted by the New Jersey State Police. Adults cannot have any contact with students in this school until the Principal or Safe Environment Coordinator (SEC) has received a copy of their clearance letter from the Office of Child & Youth Protection. In addition, the Diocese of Camden requires all adults in regular contact with minors to complete a safe environment training session called VIRTUS® Protecting God's Children (PGC). Adult volunteers are required to attend a PGC session within 60 days of initial contact with students. If a volunteer misses this deadline for whatever reason, the adult will not be allowed to volunteer until the PGC requirement is completed.

Volunteer Expectations

Volunteers are vital to our school community and cleared volunteers serve at the principal's discretion. All volunteers must agree to uphold and support St. Teresa Regional School Catholic identity, mission, and values, and adhere to our parent conduct requirements. Violating conduct requirements or safe environment requirements may result in dismissal from volunteer activities temporarily or permanently.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Pastor/Principal has the absolute discretion to interpret and apply any and all of the rules and provisions in this handbook in the manner the principal believes to be correct. Nothing this handbook says limits the principal's authority to interpret and apply the rules.

Even though this handbook explains penalties that can be imposed for certain types of misconduct or prohibited behavior, please be aware that the Pastor/Principal has the right and the authority to impose different or additional penalties and to impose penalties for offenses that are not specifically listed in this handbook if the Pastor/Principal concludes that the conduct or behavior is harmful to the good order and discipline of the school, its religious mission or its educational objectives. This includes disciplinary action for conduct that occurs on the school premises or at other locations. The penalties may include suspension and/or expulsion. The Pastor/Principal reserves the right to amend this handbook and the school policies and procedures without prior notice. Every effort will be made to advise students and parents of such changes.