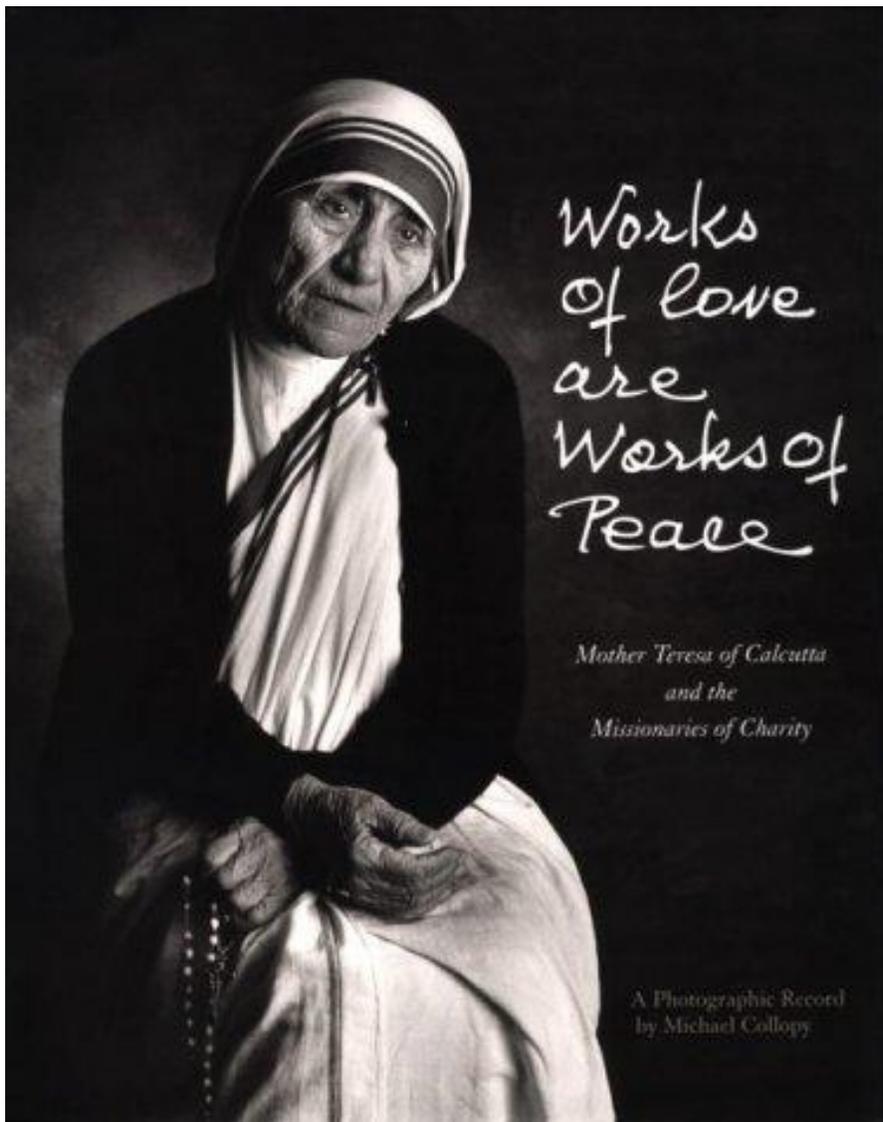


Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School

Family Handbook  
2017-2018



*Revised October 6, 2017*



# MOTHER TERESA

of Calcutta Catholic School \* Lutz, FL

Dear Parents and Students,

“I alone cannot change the world,  
but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”

*--Mother Teresa*

Welcome to Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School! In choosing Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

The Family Handbook reflects the policies of Mother Teresa of Calcutta School for the 2017-2018 school year. Please read this document carefully. The registration agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School during the 2017–2018 school year and agree to keep current with any changes to the policies throughout the year.

The faculty and staff of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

God bless you,

Mr. Jon Combs  
Principal

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## ***INTRODUCTION***

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The Catholic Elementary Schools within the Diocese of St. Petersburg strive to educate the whole child spiritually, intellectually, morally, socially, and physically in partnership with parents. This allows the Catholic elementary school to educate and evangelize students for the Church's mission in the world.

## **HISTORY**

In 1952, the Most Holy Redeemer mission became a parish with set boundaries. A year later, construction was begun on an eight classroom school and a convent to house the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Augustine, Florida. Most Holy Redeemer School, located in northeast Hillsborough County, opened its doors on September 7, 1954, with 9 classrooms (K-8). The enrollment was approximately 200 students in the nine classrooms. The school began to experience constant growth, so four additional classrooms were built in 1958. In 1961, at the request of the Diocesan Department of Education, a ninth grade was added until Central Catholic High School (later named Tampa Catholic High School) was ready for operation. In 1965, a new wing was built which included 6 classrooms and an administration complex with a library and clinic.

In 1974, Most Holy Redeemer became an area school, including the parishes of St. Paul, St. Mary, and Our Lady of the Rosary. In 1980, the school name was changed to Most Holy Redeemer Inter-Parochial School, and 2 physical education dressing rooms and a maintenance workshop were constructed. In 1982, the Sisters of St. Joseph resigned from staffing the school, and a lay administrator was hired for the first time in the history of the school. In 1983, the Sisters of the Third Franciscan Order of Syracuse, New York joined the faculty. St. Timothy parish became a participating member of the inter-parochial school system in 1985. The sisters resigned from the faculty in 1989, and the school staffing was turned over to a lay administration and faculty. In 1990, the school moved the Media Center, Computer Resource Room, and the Guidance Office to the first floor of the building.

In April 2012, Most Holy Redeemer was named one of seven schools in a new diocesan model. In July 2014, Most Holy Redeemer Catholic School became Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School. In June 2015, the school relocated to its present location in Lutz. The school is part of the Catholic School System of the Diocese of St. Petersburg and is under the direct governance of the Office of Catholic Schools regarding all educational policies, finances, as well as supervision. Children from an increasingly large geographical area now receive a Catholic education at the school. Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School will continue to provide for the spiritual, academic, physical, moral and social needs of its school community well into the 21st century.

## **MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Inspired by Mother Teresa of Calcutta and rooted in the Catholic faith, our mission is to develop young people who strive for academic excellence, recognize the dignity of each individual and foster service to others.

## **MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA CATHOLIC SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT**

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is committed to continuing our tradition of academic excellence by providing a rigorous curriculum in a nurturing Christ-centered environment. Guided by the example of Jesus and our patroness, Mother Teresa, we strive to develop a dedication of service to others and a devotion to the Catholic faith. We seek to instill self-discipline and promote the growth of the whole child - body, mind, and soul. By developing critical thinking and problem -solving skills we prepare our students for life-long learning necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **STATEMENTS OF BELIEF**

- Each student is a unique child of God.
- A safe and comfortable learning environment promotes learning and success.
- A healthy learning environment is everyone's responsibility.
- Catholic education is an integral part of the Church's mission to proclaim the gospel message of Jesus, to build faith communities, to celebrate through worship and to serve others without distinction.
- The opportunity for success is an important component of student learning.
- Ongoing evaluation and improvement of the curriculum are crucial to the development of a sound educational program.
- A Catholic school reflects the integration of Catholic faith and values with learning and life.
- A supportive and challenging learning environment increases a student's potential for responsible decision making.
- Students learn in a variety of ways.
- Student learning is a priority in this school.
- Mutual respect between the students and staff create a wholesome learning environment.
- The curriculum furnishes instruction in Catholic truths and moral values that are an integral part of the school program.

### **DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**

- **Spiritual Development:** The school's mission, philosophy and goals reflect the call by Jesus to live the gospel values daily. The gospel values further the spiritual development of the student.
- **Moral Development:** The Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Statements of Belief, and goals of the school reflect the belief that moral development begins at home and is nurtured at school through the promotion of a lifestyle reflective of gospel values.
- **Intellectual Development:** The Mission Statement, Vision Statement, philosophy, and goals of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School reflect our commitment to prepare the student with a solid foundation in skills, knowledge, and habit of independent study and a love of learning. The administrators, faculty and staff strive to lead the student to recognize his/her abilities and to accept responsibility for developing these abilities. The administrators, faculty and staff strive to prepare students to become problem solvers and to use critical thinking skills so they may be equipped to face challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- **Personal Development:** The administrators, faculty and staff are committed to develop in the student a sense of his/her worth as an individual created by God. The philosophy states that the faculty and staff

of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School strive to instill in the student the practice of the virtues necessary for his/her spiritual and moral growth as an individual and as a member of society.

- **Social Development:** The school community strives to instill a strong sense of faith, commitment, and responsibility in the student towards God, family, and country.
- **Physical Development:** The school's mission reflects a commitment to provide a safe and healthy environment for each student to grow and learn.

### **ACCREDITATION**

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is fully accredited by the State of Florida through the Florida Catholic Conference (FCC), which is affiliated with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and is listed in the Directory of Florida Non-Public Elementary Schools. The teachers and principal are certified by the State of Florida and have appropriate credentials for working in the State of Florida. Class size is limited to 35 students per class (mandated by the Florida Catholic Conference). The educational goals of the FCC are to foster the following:

- Formation of Faith
- Learning to Learn
- Expanding and Integrating Knowledge
- Communication Skills
- Thinking and Reasoning
- Interpersonal Skills
- Personal and Social Responsibilities

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is in compliance with all FCC standards and all applicable Florida State Statutes.

### **ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY**

MTC administration and faculty are part of the Catholic School System of the Diocese of St. Petersburg and under the direct governance of the Superintendent of the Office of Catholic Schools.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg restate their open admission policy, namely, that no person on the grounds of race, color, national or ethnic origin is discriminated against in admission or in receiving services in any school/center operated by them nor do they hire, assign, promote, discharge, or pay staff, offer fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral and other aspects of employment on the basis of race, color, disability, age, national or ethnic origin, or gender of the individuals they are to serve.

## **ADMISSIONS AND RE-REGISTRATION**

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The open admission and re-registration policy of Mother Teresa of Calcutta (MTC) Catholic School allows no person to be discriminated against on the basis of race, color or ethnic origin, nor is the staff hired or assigned on the basis of race, color or ethnic origin.

Students attend Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School by invitation. The invitation to attend may be withdrawn at any time if a student exhibits behavioral or academic difficulties. The principal is responsible for the final decision in the acceptance of new students and re-registration of current students.

### **ADMISSION GUIDELINES**

- Age requirements, according to Florida State Law, are followed. A child must be five (5) years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year to be admitted to kindergarten. In order to enter first grade, a child must have satisfactorily completed kindergarten and be six (6) years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year. Exceptions may be made for out of state transfers.
- Priority is given to children who have brothers or sisters currently enrolled at MTC.
- No child will be admitted without a thorough physical examination (less than 365 days from the start date of the school) and every child must be immunized according to current Florida State Law. Students entering 7th or 8th grade, must submit proof from their physician of having received immunization Tdap. Proof of immunizations and physical exam are due before entry into MTC.
- Application fee is non-refundable. This fee covers processing of the application and academic testing.
- Original birth certificate, a copy of the baptismal certificate, copies of prior two years of reports cards, and copies of prior two years of standardized test results must be brought to the school office during the application process.
- Completed Pastor Recommendation Form is required if applying for registered Catholic tuition rate.
- MTC Entrance Test for children entering 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This assessment measures reading and math achievement.
- MTC Kindergarten Readiness Assessment for children entering kindergarten.
- If a student has any special needs, additional testing may be required in order to determine if the child's academic and behavior needs can be met at MTC. Copies of support plans, IEP's and/or medical documentation required.
- After acceptance to MTC, there is a non-refundable registration fee. This fee secures a spot for your child at our school for the following year. Payment indicates a commitment from your family to our school.

### **RE-REGISTRATION GUIDELINES**

- Satisfactory academic and conduct from previous grade level have been met.
- Students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade must submit proof from their physician of having received immunization Tdap. Students may not start school until this requirement has been met.

- There is a non-refundable re-registration fee. This fee secures a spot for your child at our school for the following year. Payment indicates a commitment from your family to our school.

### **LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

Mother Teresa of Calcutta School does not have a special education program. Only limited accommodations can be made in the mainstream classroom for those students who have a documented learning difference. MTC does not modify the curriculum and all children are expected to follow the code of conduct and behavior expectations. Learning differences must be revealed to the school at the time of admission. If learning differences are identified after the student is accepted and it is determined the school cannot meet the student's learning or behavior needs, the principal may ask the student to withdraw from the school.

### **WITHDRAWAL PROCESS**

Parents/guardians are to inform the principal in writing prior to a student's withdrawal from the school. Parents/guardians must satisfy all financial commitments to the school before a student is withdrawn.

## ***FINANCES***

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**Tuition and Fees:** Tuition is payable through FACTS Tuition Management Company. Parents will receive an online invite email from FACTS to set up an account. Parents can contact Facts with any questions at 866-412-4637.

Tuition Payment Options:

- Paid in full by the last day of the previous school year for a 3% discount.
- Ten monthly payments made by the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of each month through FACTS; August – May.
- Twelve monthly payments made by the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of each month through FACTS; June – May.

### Tuition Rates for 2017-2018

Registered Catholics	Paid in Full by 5/31/17	10 Monthly Payments	12 Monthly Payments
One Child \$ 6,275.00	\$ 6,087.00	\$ 627.50	\$ 522.92
Two Children \$12,107.00 (\$6,275.00 + \$5,832.00)	\$ 11,744.00	\$ 1,210.70	\$ 1,008.92
Three Children \$17,722.00 (\$6,275.00 + \$5,832.00 + \$5,615.00)	\$ 17,190.00	\$ 1,772.20	\$ 1,476.83
Four Children \$23,337.00 (\$6,275.00 + \$5,832.00 + \$5,615.00 + \$5,615.00)	\$ 22,637.00	\$ 2,333.70	\$ 1,944.75
<b>Non-Registered Catholics</b>			
One Child \$7,850.00	\$ 7,614.50	\$ 785.00	\$ 654.17
Two Children \$15,700.00	\$ 15,229.00	\$ 1,570.00	\$ 1,308.33
Three Children \$23,550.00	\$ 22,843.00	\$ 2,355.00	\$ 1,962.50
Four Children \$31,400.00	\$ 30,458.00	\$ 3,140.00	\$ 2,616.67

Application Fee \$120 for New families (non-refundable)  
Registration Fee \$600 for All Families (non-refundable)

**Tuition Assistance/Scholarships:** Tuition assistance is available. Applications for tuition assistance begin in the spring of the year proceeding the school year of which you are seeking assistance.

- **Catholic School Tuition Assistance Grant (CSTAG)** – New families and current families who are active and practicing members of their Catholic faith are eligible for this type of assistance. Income levels do apply. Students may not be a recipient of either the Step Up or McKay scholarship. Please refer to the following website: [www.dosp.org](http://www.dosp.org) under the Education tab and Catholic Schools and Tuition Aid/Diocesan Assistance page for more information. Apply through Facts Tuition Grant and Aid <http://factsmgt.com/parent-resources/grant-and-aid/>
- **Mary C. Forbes** - The Mary C. Forbes Foundation application can be requested from the school office. This scholarship is only available to active and participating Catholic families and must be approved by your Pastor.
- **Step Up For Students** - Step Up for Students Scholarship is an income based corporate tax scholarship available through the State of Florida. Students may not be a recipient of the McKay scholarship.

Information regarding this scholarship can be found on the following website:

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

- **McKay Scholarship** - This scholarship is available through the State of Florida and is intended for students with IEP's and those with other learning accommodations. Students may not be a recipient of the Step Up scholarship. More information is available on the following website:  
[www.floridaschoolchoice.org](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org)
- **Gardiner Scholarship** - This scholarship is available through the State of Florida and is intended for students with IEP's and those with a disability. Students may not be a recipient of either of the McKay scholarship or Step UP Scholarship. More information is available on the following website:  
[www.floridaschoolchoice.org](http://www.floridaschoolchoice.org)

**Delinquent Accounts:** Parents and guardians of children attending Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School are fully responsible for all financial commitments set forth in their Admission Contract as well as those set forth in this handbook. Our school's main source of income is tuition. When accounts become delinquent, it has a direct negative effect on the school. Any outstanding tuition after 30 days will put your child's continued attendance at MTC in jeopardy. Please contact the principal if you are having difficulty. If financial obligations are not met, students will not be allowed to return to school until acceptable terms can be agreed upon. Payment of all financial obligations must be made before the student can sit for final assessments. If payments are not made, a report card grade of "Incomplete" will be given and the child will not be promoted to the next grade level. Financial obligations include tuition, service hour fees, after care, all books returned, and any other fees owed to the school.

## ***SCHOOL HOURS***

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**Office Hours:** The school office is open during the following times:

- Regular Office Hours                      Monday – Thursday (7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)  
Friday (7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.)
- Early Dismissals Office Hours            7:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
- Holidays and Weekends                    Closed
- Summer Office Hours                      Monday – Thursday (9:00 a.m. –1:00 p.m.)

**Regular Instructional Hours:** 7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Early Dismissal Instructional Hours:** 7:30 a.m. – 11:30 am.

**Before School Care:** Before school care is offered free of charge from 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. Parents should drop their child off at the front gate and a staff member will escort or direct them to the cafeteria.

**After School Care:** After school care is offered for a small fee from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on regular school days and from 11:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on early dismissal days. The program is operated by MTC staff members and maintains the high standards of care that the children encounter during the school day. Students have the opportunity to socialize, complete and get help on homework, do arts and crafts, and enjoy sports and other activities based on their age level and interests. A healthy snack is also provided. Our after school care program is a privilege and misbehavior can result in being asked to not return.

## **ATTENDANCE**

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Success at Mother Teresa of Calcutta begins with consistent daily attendance. Students are expected to be in school and on time every day school is in session. The Florida State Legislature has determined that parents/guardians have the primary responsibility to establish habits of regular attendance and promptness.

### **ARRIVAL**

School begins at 7:30 a.m. and students are to go directly to their homeroom. Students arriving at or later than 7:45 a.m. are tardy. A student's tardiness and absences are noted in his/her attendance record. Regular and punctual attendance for each school day and for each class is expected of all students. Arriving early or on time allows students to mentally and physically prepare for the day in a calm and unhurried manner. Arriving on time promotes an optimal learning opportunity for your child and minimizes distraction for other children.

### **DISMISSAL**

School dismisses at 3:00 p.m. Please be sure your child is picked up by 3:15 p.m. Supervision ends at that time. Students left on campus after 3:15 p.m. will be sent to the after school care program. A fee per child will be charged. On early dismissal days, school ends at 11:30 a.m., and students will be sent to after school care after 11:45 a.m.

### **TARDINESS**

Any student not in the classroom by 7:45 a.m. is considered tardy and will be recorded tardy at the front gate. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must sign in at the front office.

### **REPORTING DEFINITIONS**

- Tardy – non-attendance of a student for less than 60 minutes of the school day (morning or afternoon).
- Half day absence -- non-attendance of a student for 1 to 3 hours, 59 minutes.
- Full day absence – non-attendance of a student for 4 hours or more.
- Truancy—non-attendance of a student with/without parental consent or knowledge.

### **LEAVING THE PREMISES**

No child is permitted to leave the school grounds without proper permission. This applies to the regular school day as well as all other school functions. If participation takes place in extra-curricular activities or after-school events, no child may leave the premises and then return again for the event. If a parent takes the child and then returns them, this is permissible. If a child has been absent for more than a half day, the child may not return for extra-curricular activities that day.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**  
**OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND CENTERS**  
**DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG**

**Attendance (K-8)**

Success in any field requires a continuous daily effort. Nowhere is this truer than in education. The quality of learning for any student reflects the regularity with which he/she attends classes. Our attendance regulations have been formulated as a means of helping our students develop habits which will serve them best while in school and in later years.

State of Florida law requires those children between the ages of 5 and 16 attend school. Regular attendance and punctuality have a marked influence upon scholastic achievement. Attendance is an essential element to good progress in school.

School calendars are distributed to families to aid them in planning family vacations. Schools strongly encourage families to plan vacations during scheduled school vacations. Any vacation related absences will be included in the student's total number of absences.

Parents/guardians must notify the school office of a child's absence at 813-933-4750 prior to 9:00 a.m. As a safety procedure, if a child is absent and the parents have not called, the school will attempt to contact the parents. When a student is absent, the school must receive communication from parents/guardians explaining the reason for the absence, either voice message or electronic. The communication must include 1) the child's full name, 2) dates of absence, and 3) the nature of illness or reason for absence.

In the case of prolonged medical absence, three or more days, parents should call the office before 9:00 a.m. for missed class work and homework, so the work can be prepared and be ready for pickup at dismissal time. Due to teaching schedules it may take up to 24 hours to have materials prepared for pickup in the school office. Based on the number of days absent and the amount of work missed, a reasonable amount of time will be allowed for its completion.

Ten (10) tardies in a trimester are considered excessive. A notification will be sent home on the tenth tardy. A conference with the school counselor and homeroom teacher will be mandatory.

Six (6) absences in a trimester are considered excessive. A notification will be sent home on the sixth absence. A conference with the school counselor and homeroom teacher will be mandatory. On the seventh absence, consequences may be given. If your child is going to be out for any length of time due to a family commitment, please send a note to the school office at least a week in advance.

Students should not be permitted to return to school unless well enough to participate in school activities. Students must be present for at least four (4) hours of the school day to be considered present that day. In order to participate in any after school activities, including the extended day program, students must be present on that day. Students who are absent more than 20 school days during the year may be under administrative review for academic retention and may be asked to withdraw from Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School.

Students who are absent are required to make up work missed in each class. If a student is out for only one or two days, upon return to school, the student should meet with the teacher about the work missed. The student will be given a deadline by the teacher to complete and turn in these assignments. It is the responsibility of the student to see that the work is completed. The student may log on to the portal to check the homework missed. If work is not made up by the deadline specified by the teacher, the grade for work missed will be recorded as a 50.

Any student who is absent on the day of a scheduled summative assessment will be expected to make it up upon his/her return to school. For every day a student is absent, he/she has that number of days to make up the summative assessment (Ex. 1 day missed = 1 day for summative assessment.) It is the student's responsibility to speak with his/her teacher regarding missed assessments. In the event of multiple-day absences, the teacher will determine when all assessments will be taken.

## **ACADEMICS**

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Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School follows the curriculum as outlined by the Diocese of St. Petersburg Office of Catholic Schools. Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is first and foremost a Christ-centered school and a community of faith. Religious education and faith formation play a key part in the curriculum and form an integral part of our daily school life. All students attend religion classes that provide the foundation for understanding the Catholic faith and living a faith commitment. The student body attends weekly Mass. Stewardship is a way of life for Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School students. Opportunities for stewardship and service, both within the school community and beyond, are afforded the students. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's faith commitment.

### **Curriculum**

The Diocesan curriculum offers an excellent course of studies designed to foster the holistic development of each child. All lessons and daily life at Mother Teresa are infused with our Catholic identity in accordance with the Catholic Common Core Identity Initiative. Math and Reading/Language Arts are based on Florida Core Standards. Religion concepts are based on Diocesan Standards. All other subjects are based on Next Generation Standards.

The curriculum is divided into Core I Subjects with mandatory time allotments and Core II Subjects of enrichment with recommended time allotments. Core I Subjects are taught in self-contained classes for children in Kindergarten through grade two, and are departmentalized for students in grades three through eight. The Core subjects are:

Core I Subjects: Christian Formation, Language Arts/Literature, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies  
Core II Subjects: Technology, Spanish, Music, Art, Physical Education

**Middle School Mathematics:** MTC offers three different math courses for each middle school grade level. The math courses offered are:

8th Grade: Algebra 1 Honors, Algebra 1 Advanced, Pre-Algebra  
7th Grade: Honors, Advanced, Standard  
6th Grade: Honors, Advanced, Standard

At all times there is thoughtful consideration exercised by the teachers and administration to ensure that each student is placed at the level where he/she will be appropriately challenged and able to achieve independent success. Data used to determine middle school math course placement include:

IA scores in mathematics  
STAR Math scores  
Report card final average score in mathematics  
Teacher recommendations

Students demonstrating outstanding performance and earning a grade of 97% or higher at the end of the first trimester, are permitted to move up one track.

**Kindergarten:** Kindergarten is a full day program following the guidelines set up by the Florida Catholic Conference. The purpose of the program is to foster a love of the Church and the school through the gentle discovery of the wonders of the world that God has made and given to us. The following subjects are taught: Christian formation, reading readiness and phonics, handwriting, math, science, social studies, health, art, drama, music, physical education and computer science. Several approaches are used in teaching skills in these

areas. Manipulatives, textbooks, technology, workbooks and worksheets are only some of the mediums used in our program. To the extent that the teacher is able, methods are adjusted in the acquisition of skills to meet the individual needs of each child. Questions, curiosity and investigation are encouraged.

**Physical Education:** All students must participate in physical education. If a student cannot participate in P.E. because of an illness or injury, a note from the parents will excuse a student three consecutive P.E. days. If a student will not be able to participate for more than three consecutive days, a note from a doctor is required. Students who cannot participate will be required to attend the class unless excused by the doctor's note. If a child must be excused from physical activity by doctor's note, grades will be compiled from all verbal and written schoolwork provided by the teacher. If a child is absent or unable to participate altogether for a period of 4-6 weeks, no grade is given.

**Guidance:** Mother Teresa of Calcutta has a full-time Guidance Counselor. Guidance services are available to all students. Individual counseling, group guidance and classroom guidance lessons are offered, along with academic testing and referrals to public schools /outside professionals for academic/psychological evaluations.

**Field Trips:** The purpose of a field trip is to enrich the curriculum, foster knowledge of the community, and develop and refine student behavior appropriate to a variety of social situations. By the time students graduate from Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School, they will have visited many of the cultural resources of the central Florida area. Field trips are also an integral part of the development of the subject studied. They are well planned, and students should view them as class outside the classroom. Attending field trips is a privilege and only those students who meet academic and conduct requirements will be afforded the privilege. Exemplary behavior is expected on all field trips. Children are transported by bus, not by cars; this is for insurance purposes and for legal reasons. Therefore, children are required to pay for transportation. All students must return the school's "Diocese Field Trip Permission Form" signed by parents/guardians. Verbal permission for a field trip and/or a different form is not acceptable. Parents interested in being a chaperone must be an approved volunteer. The Volunteer Handbook and Application Forms are available on our school website.

### Academic Awards

**End of Trimester Awards:** The following awards are presented at the end of each trimester.

Grades K-8

- Mother Teresa of Calcutta Christian Award
  - One from each homeroom
  - Spirit of reverence
  - Academic effort according to the student's ability
  - Exemplary conduct
  - Respect for others
  - Integrity
  - Evidence of service (willingness to help)
  - Goes above and beyond the norm

Grades 4-8

- High Honor Roll
- Honor Roll

**End of the Year Awards:** The following awards are presented at the end of the school year.

Grades 4-7

- High Honor Roll – all 3 Trimesters
- Combination of Honor Rolls – all 3 Trimesters
- Honor Roll – all 3 Trimesters
- Safety Patrols
- Altar Servers
- Student Council
- Duke University Talent Identification
- National Junior Honor Society

Grade 8

- High Honor Roll – all 3 Trimesters
- Combination of Honor Rolls – all 3 Trimesters
- Honor Roll – all 3 Trimesters
- Safety Patrols
- Altar Servers
- Student Council
- Duke University Talent Identification
- National Junior Honor Society
- The Presidential Award for Educational Excellence
  - Grade point average of 90% or higher during the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade years
  - High motivation
  - High initiative
  - Integrity
  - Intellectual depth
  - Leadership qualities
- The Mother Teresa Christian Service Award
  - Devoted to service both inside and outside the school community
  - Goes above and beyond service requirements
  - Takes pleasure in serving others
  - Demonstrates a unique understanding and knowledge of our Faith
  - Academic effort in Religion
  - Focus on decency, respect, obedience, and trust
- The St. Albert the Great Excellence in Science Award
  - Wide knowledge of the Sciences
  - Exhibits higher cognitive thinking in scientific knowledge, process, and attitudes
  - Able to formulate ideas and bring them to logical conclusions
  - Displays effort and cooperation in class
  - Exemplary academic achievement
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum

- The St. Augustine Excellence in Language Arts Award
  - Excel in all phases of the Language Arts curriculum: Reading, Writing, Grammar, Speaking, and Listening
  - Displays effort and cooperation in class
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum
  - Exemplary Academic Achievement
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum
- The St. Hubertus Excellence in Mathematics Award
  - Achieve high standards in the study of mathematics
  - Exemplary understanding of mathematical concepts and formulas
  - Exemplary academic achievement
  - Displays effort and cooperation in class
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum
- St. Bede the Venerable Excellence in Social Studies Award
  - Displays effort and cooperation in class
  - Exemplary Academic Achievement
  - Outstanding understanding of political and historical aspects of the past, present, and future
  - Exhibits interest in Social Studies and a sense of nationalism
  - Striking ability to interpret maps, graphs, and political pictures
  - Superior ability to apply social science theories to everyday activities
  - Active participation in class
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum
- The St. Sebastian Excellence in Physical Education Award
  - Exemplary sportsmanship
  - Exhibition of Athletic leadership
  - Active, enthusiastic participation, cooperation and effort in PE class and various sports at Mother Teresa of Calcutta.
  - Exhibits interest in applied Physical Education
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum
- The St. James the Greater Excellence in Spanish Award
  - Excellence in the study of Spanish Language
  - Displays effort and cooperation in class
  - Exemplary Academic Achievement
  - Outstanding understanding of Spanish
  - Striking ability to communicate in the target language
  - Active participation in class
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum
- The St. Isidore of Seville Excellence in Technology Award
  - Excellence in Computer and Technology skills
  - Displays effort and cooperation in class
  - Exemplary Academic Achievement
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum

- The St. Catherine of Bologna Excellence in Art Award
  - Outstanding talent and effort in Art
  - Displays effort and cooperation in class
  - Active participation in class
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum
- The St. Cecelia Excellence in Music Award
  - Displays effort and cooperation in Music class
  - True love for Music performance and learning
  - Active participation in Musical Programs
  - Active participation in school Mass
  - Goes above and beyond what is expected in the curriculum

Receiving any award at Mother Teresa is a privilege and not a right. Mother Teresa reserves the right to select and distribute awards as selected by the school faculty, staff, and administration.

### **Academic Testing and Progress Monitoring**

The academic progress of students is closely monitored and reported to parents throughout the school year. By closely monitoring the progress of students, teachers are able to identify areas that require more intensive or alternate forms of instruction. The assessments used to monitor progress are:

- Formative Assessments – ongoing
- Summative Assessments – ongoing
- STAR Reading Assessment – Administered in August, January and April
- STAR Math Assessment – Administered in August, January and April
- Iowa Assessment – Administered in March. Students in grades 2-8 complete the Iowa Assessments.
- Florida Department of Education VPK Assessment - Administered in September to kindergarten students that attended a VPK program.
- ACRE (Assessment of Catechesis of Religious Education) - Administered in the spring to students in grades 5 and 8.

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is expected of all students. Cheating, copying another's work, allowing other's to copy, plagiarism, and doing another person's homework, are forms of academic dishonesty. Any student that violates this policy will receive a failing grade of 50% on their assessment or assignment. Academic dishonesty may lead to other disciplinary procedures such a referral, detention, suspension, or possible expulsion.

### **Textbooks and Resources**

Textbooks are issued to students at the beginning of the school year. Textbooks are reviewed and updated on a regular basis and are provided to students on a rental basis. Parents/guardians will be assessed the replacement cost for damaged or lost rental materials. Consumable resources are purchased by the parent/guardian, and must be replaced by parent/guardian if lost or damaged. A class planner is provided to each student. The planner is a

tool to help students develop responsibility and organizational skills. It also serves as a tool to facilitate communication between the school and home. The planner is the property of the school.

### **Sacramental Program**

All sacramental preparation and the reception of the sacraments are done in your parish, not the school. Details of instructions, parent education, and the time the sacrament is to be received will be given to you by the pastor of your parish. The Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist are usually received when the child is in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Students who receive the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in their parish will participate in a school Mass to celebrate the reception of the sacrament. The Sacrament of Confirmation is usually received during the high school years. Your pastor will give you specific details for the reception of these sacraments.

During the seasons of Advent and Lent, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered to students in grades 3 through 8.

### **Weekly Liturgies**

Students attend Mass weekly. Teachers accompany their students to Mass and remain with them during the Mass. Non-Catholic students will follow the same Christian Formation curriculum as Catholic students and will also attend Mass.

### **Summer Reading and Math**

There are mandatory summer reading and math requirements for all students entering grades 1-8. Information is provided on the school's website and in the final report card envelope.

### **Promotion and Retention**

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, students must meet the curricular and developmental requirements of their current grade. In determining whether a student will be promoted or retained, the teachers and administration will consider how the needs of the student can be met most effectively. If the teachers and administration feel that it is not in the best interest of the student to advance to the next grade, based upon criteria listed below, retention may be considered. In such cases, a great deal of communication will take place between parents and the school staff. Parents will be given ample opportunity to express their concerns regarding the academic needs of the student. The final decision will rest with the principal as advised by the student's teacher(s).

Some questions that would influence the staff's decision regarding promotion are:

- Has the student mastered basic concepts and skills in the core subjects (language arts and math)?
- Has the student met the Florida Core Standards, Next Generation Standards, and Diocesan Standards?
- Is the student consistently able to complete class work?
- Does the student assume responsibility for homework assignments?
- Has the student received multiple C's, D's or F's?

**Grades 3-8:** The core subjects in the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of St. Petersburg are religion, math, language arts, science, and social studies. A student enrolled in a Catholic School who fails one core subject

must participate in a remedial program. Failure of two core subjects will result in remediation or retention at the discretion of the principal. Failure of three or more core subjects will result in retention.

Students have the following options for remediation:

- Florida Virtual School
- Private Tutoring - minimum of 20 hours per subject
- Remedial Program – minimum of 20 hours per subject

Teacher(s) or programs providing remediation must meet the following requirements:

- Hold current certification in the subject area in which the student needs remediation
- Be contracted by the parent
- Meet the school principal's approval
- May not be the student's current teacher or have the possibility of being the student's teacher in the future.
- All remedial services must follow the guidelines of the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers at the expense of the parents/guardians.

Prior to the beginning of the next school year, the principal must receive:

- Tutoring Verification form to validate attendance
- Proof of proficiency in the subject area including work samples and test scores

## ***GRADING***

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Communication between teachers, students, and parents is of vital importance for the continued progress of each student. Parents have access to their child's grades at all times through the online grading program, RenWeb. Teachers update student records on a weekly basis. Please monitor your child's progress, and contact your child's teacher(s) if there are any questions or concerns.

### **Report Cards and Progress Reports**

Report cards are issued at the end of each trimester. Progress reports are emailed to parents at the halfway point in each trimester.

## **GRADING POLICY OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND CENTERS DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG**

### **Philosophy**

We believe ...

- Students should have a clear understanding of the learning objectives
- Our system of grading should be timely, specific, fair and accurate
- Grades should be based on a well-defined set of standards
- Grades should be an accurate measure of a student's ability to demonstrate understanding
- Criteria that are not a direct measure of student learning, such as work habits and behavior, should be reported separately from the academic grade
- Assessments are critical to the teaching and learning process

### **Purpose of Assessment**

An assessment is defined as any instrument that is able to indicate or provide feedback on student achievement or performance. The purpose of an assessment may be summarized as follows:

- To provide information to students in regard to their progress towards mastery of a learning standard(s). In addition, it provides information for self-evaluation and the incentives to learn.
- To provide information to teachers on the individual student's level of mastery of the content/skill.
- To allow teachers to use assessment data to plan instruction that will meet the needs of students.
- To communicate information to parents about student achievement and performance in school.

### **Types of Assessments**

While assessments will take many forms and types, they will be grouped under two broad categories:

- **Formative:** Whenever a student learns new material, he or she needs time to practice and gain familiarity with the material. It is expected that the student will make mistakes during this learning process. Any work done during this learning period is considered *formative*. The purpose of a *formative* assessment is not to judge a student's final competency on a topic or unit, but to evaluate where he or she is in the learning process, diagnose any problems, and motivate and help the student learn the material. Formative assessments also inform the teacher of learning areas that may need reinforcement or re-teaching.

- **Summative:** After a student has had sufficient instruction and practice on a topic, including assessments of a formative nature, it is then reasonable to judge mastery of understanding, content or skills. The purpose of a summative assessment is to evaluate how well a student knows and understands the material after sufficient engagement and practice with it.

Assessments are *Formative* or *Summative* based on their intended use and purpose and not by form. A quiz for example, may be formative if the teacher is having the students use new concepts to ascertain their level of understanding. A quiz would be a summative assessment if used at the end of a learning section or curriculum chunk after the students have had adequate instruction and practice. In the same way, a trial test is formative, while an end of chapter test is summative. Projects contain both formative and summative elements. They include the ongoing nature of practice, reflective thinking and reworking, before the final summative rendition. Homework is mainly formative in nature as students get familiar with or reinforce what was learned in the classroom.

### **Purpose of Grades**

A grade is a recorded score derived from an assessment or assessments. The purpose of grades may be summarized as follows:

- To provide information to students with regard to their performance relative to the learning standard(s).
- To provide information to teachers on the individual student's level of mastery of the content/skill.
- To communicate information to parents about student achievement and performance in school.
- To document student performance for transcripts and to evaluate the effectiveness of school programs.

### **The Grade Composition**

In order to represent an accurate measure of what a student knows, understands and is able to do, the academic trimester/semester grade needs to be based primarily on work that is evaluated for appropriate content, understanding and correctness, at a time when the student has had sufficient instruction and practice to be responsible for the material. Summative assessments will therefore be the primary constituent of the trimester/semester grade. They will account for no less than 80% of the trimester/semester grade. Formative assessments will account for no more than 20% of the trimester/semester grade.

Criteria that are not a direct measure of student learning will not be included in the academic grade. These attributes will be reported separately. (Please see *Section G: Reporting Conduct and Approaches to Learning*)

### **Reporting Grades**

Individual assignments will be assessed traditionally or by using a rubric. When traditional grading is used, 50% will be the lowest failing grade recorded. The following generic achievement descriptors will serve as a scoring guide.

## SCORING GUIDE

Letter Grade	Descriptor	% Score
A	The student provides evidence of deep understanding and fluent application of the target standard(s).	90-100
B	The student is close to meeting the target standard(s).	80-89
C	The student meets part of the target standard(s).	70-79
D	The student is just beginning to address the basic ideas of the target standard(s).	60-69
F	The student provides little to no evidence of addressing the target standard(s), including missing or incomplete work.	50-59

At the end of the marking period (trimester or semester), the mean of all assessments (with appropriate weights) is matched to the scoring guide for a final letter grade and the awarding of corresponding quality/grade points (if applicable).

### Reporting Conduct and Approaches to Learning

The Diocese recognizes that the cultivation of good behavioral and learning habits and behaviors support learning in the long run.

#### Conduct

While schools may create their own rubric for Conduct, the principles of Respect and Responsibility should be the focus for conduct behaviors. The following are the indicators of Respect and Responsibility:

##### *Respect*

- Demonstrates a good attitude
- Is respectful to adults and peers in speech and action
- Maintains positive peer relationships
- Respectful of personal, peer, and school property

##### *Responsibility*

- Exhibits self-control
- Follows directions and does not need constant reminders
- Socializes only at appropriate times
- Takes ownership for behavior

The following is an example of a rubric for the reporting of *Conduct*.

	<b>Respect</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>4 Exceeds</b>	Consistently respectful, kind and cooperative.	Consistently follows school/classroom rules and directions.
<b>3 Meets</b>	Frequently respectful, kind and cooperative.	Frequently follows school/classroom rules and directions.
<b>2 Developing</b>	Occasionally respectful, kind and cooperative.	Occasionally follows school/classroom rules and directions.
<b>1 Rarely</b>	Rarely respectful, kind and cooperative.	Rarely follows school/classroom rules and directions.

### **Approaches to Learning (ATL)**

While schools may create their own rubric for ATL, the principles of Organization, Communication / Collaboration and Reflective Thinking should be the focus for all ATL behaviors. The following are the indicators of Organization, Communication/ Collaboration and Reflective Thinking.

#### *Organization*

- Prepared for class
- Punctual with homework and in-class assignments
- Completed homework and in-class assignments

#### *Collaboration & Communication*

- Participates in class
- Attentive and engaged during instruction
- Demonstrates helpfulness and teamwork

#### *Reflection & Personal Initiative*

- Open to teacher help and correction
- Makes effort to improve behavior/performance by seeking help when needed
- Makes time for personal study and improvement

The following is an example of a rubric for the reporting of ATL.

	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Collaboration &amp; Communication</b>	<b>Reflective Thinking</b>
4 Exceeds	Consistently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Consistently attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Consistently open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
3 Meets	Frequently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Frequently attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Frequently open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
2 Developing	Occasionally displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Occasionally attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Occasionally open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
1 Rarely	Rarely displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality and task completion.	Rarely attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Rarely open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.

### Other Matters on Assessment and Grades:

#### Honor Roll

Honor Roll is awarded to students in grades 4-8 who encompass merit and integrity that results in academic and behavioral success. Honor Roll eligibility is determined by:

- Grades in all subject areas
- Approaches to Learning (ATL's) in all classes
- Conduct in all classes

Students can earn Principal's Honors or Honors. Eligibility requirements follow:

#### Principal's Honors

- All A's
- 3 or 4 in ATL's
- 3 or 4 in Conduct

#### Honors

- All A's and B's
- 3 or 4 in ATL's
- 3 or 4 in Conduct

### **Make-Up of Academic Work during Absence**

Students who are absent are required to make up work missed in each class. If a student is out for only one or two days, upon return to school, the student should meet with the teacher about the work missed. The student will be given a deadline by the teacher to complete and turn in these assignments. It is the responsibility of the student to see that the work is completed. The student may log on to the portal to check the homework missed. If work is not made up by the deadline specified by the teacher, the grade for work missed will be recorded as a 50.

In the case of prolonged absence, three or more days, parents should call the office before 8:30 a.m. for missed class work and homework so that the work can be prepared and be ready for pickup at dismissal time or sent via e-mail. Based on the number of days absent and the amount of work missed, a reasonable amount of time will be allowed for its completion.

Homework assignments for extended absences should be arranged with the teacher. Parents may pick up textbooks, if necessary, at the end of the school day but should email the teacher by 10a.m. to arrange this. Requests for homework should be made by contacting the classroom/subject teacher. Due to teaching schedules requests may take up to 24 hours to be completed.

### **Make-Up of a Scheduled Summative Assessment during Absence**

Any student who is absent on the day of a scheduled summative assessment will be expected to make it up upon his/her return to school. For every day a student is absent, he/she has that number of days to make up the summative assessment (Ex. 1 day missed = 1 day for summative assessment.) It is the student's responsibility to speak with his/her teacher regarding missed assessments. In the event of multiple-day absences, the teacher will determine when all assessments will be taken.

### **Retakes**

*The focus of the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg is to always encourage and support the learning process that leads to mastery. This retake policy supports this emphasis on learning and relearning. Teachers have the discretion to refuse retakes to students who do not fully engage in the learning process prior to the summative.\**

The following retake policy is designed to encourage relearning on the part of the student:

#### **Criteria for Retakes**

Grades K-5:

- All students are eligible for a retake assessment.
- The retake process will be initiated by the teacher. The teacher will communicate with the parent when a retake is necessary.
- A student may retake a summative once.
- Students may be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake.

#### Grades 6-8:

- All students are eligible for a retake assessment.
- The retake process **must** be initiated by the student.
- A student may retake a summative once.
- The Application for a retake should be completed by the student (with parent, if needed), signed by student and parent, and returned to the examining teacher no more than five (5) school days after the grade has been posted.
- On the Application for a Retake, the student will identify the deficient standards/topics and include a clear learning plan and timeline to close the learning gap.
- Students may be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake.

#### **Limitations and Deadlines (K-12)**

- Only one retake will be allowed per summative.
- All graded formative assessments must be completed prior to the original summative.
- The retake for any summative in a unit must be completed before the date of the first summative of the following unit.
- Trimester summatives that are extended projects with ongoing feedback and clear completion deadlines do not qualify for retakes.
- The student will forfeit the retake opportunity if either the scheduled retake date or a scheduled teacher required additional practice is missed, unless excused or rescheduled by the teacher.

#### **Teacher Facilitations (K-12)**

- Teachers will group summative assessments around specific learning standards to help the student identify deficiencies and plan a successful retake. Teachers will post retake dates when the summative assessments are returned.
- The retake will only assess the deficient standards, allowing the student to focus on closing the learning gap and improving the assessment score. The higher grade (out of the retake or the original grade) will be recorded for credit in the grade book.
- Teachers have discretion and may require that a student complete missing ungraded assignments correlated to the deficiencies before the retake is administered.
- Teachers have discretion over the format of the retake assessment.
- Teachers reserve the right to deny a student from a retake before, during, or after the retake form is completed if the teacher can show due cause as to why there should not be a retake. This may include, but is not limited to, situations that involve academic dishonesty.

#### **Zeros**

- Teachers understand that a zero (on the 100-point scale) on an assignment is a disproportionate penalty that places the student at a disadvantage when it comes to making up the grade deficit. A score of 50 represents the lowest failing score. Any assessment that is not turned in on the due date, the student will receive an automatic 50.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

The mission at Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is to provide students with a solid technology-integrated education. Developing 21st century skills is essential for today's students to meet state standards, perform on assessments, and be college and career ready. Digital skills improve critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity in students. MTC is committed to academic excellence utilizing technology by providing access to digital tools in all classes.

**Technology Plan:** Technology Plan for the 2017- 2018 school year includes 1:1 iPads for students in grade 8 and shared digital device access for all students in all classrooms. MTC will be evaluating and refining for expansion to additional 1:1 for students in other grade levels in the coming years.

**Social Media:** Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School has created its own social media outlets which includes a Facebook account. No other social media, such as Facebook pages, should be created that claim to represent the school other than those created by the administration of the school.

**Technology Concerns:** The postings of defamatory comments by parents or students on websites and social networks such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Skype, Twitter, You Tube, Instagram and Snapchat regarding the Diocese, school, administration, faculty/staff members or other students is strictly forbidden. Parents should use caution when taking pictures of MTC ceremonies and functions. Many parents do not desire their children's pictures published on web sites. Consideration, caution, and common sense are suggested.

The school acknowledges that technology should be used as a vehicle of communication that reflects Catholic values and moral decision making; therefore it is required that all use of technology at Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School adhere to the following Diocese of St. Petersburg Student Internet Use Policy:

### **STUDENT INTERNET USE POLICY OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND CENTERS DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG**

This document sets forth the rights and responsibilities for students under the Diocese of St. Petersburg Student Internet Use Policy. This Student Internet Use Policy is, by reference, a part of the Student Internet Account Agreement which must be executed by each Student and each Student's Parent or Guardian.

- Educational Purpose:
  - The School Internet system has been established for a limited educational purpose. Educational purposes include classroom activities, continuing education, professional or career development, and high-quality, educationally enriching personal research.
  - The School Internet system has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The Diocese and school has the right to place restrictions on the material you access or post through the School Internet system. You are expected to follow the rules set forth in this policy, the student disciplinary code, and the law in

your use of the School Internet system. The student disciplinary code will govern any violations of this policy.

- You may not use the School Internet system for commercial purposes. This means you may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the School Internet system.
- Access to Online Materials:
  - The material you access through the School Internet system should be for class assignments or for personal research on subjects you study in a class or would otherwise research in the school library. Use for entertainment purposes is not allowed.
  - You are not allowed to use the School Internet system to access inappropriate information, which includes, but is not limited to, the following: obscene material, child pornography, material which depicts or describes in an offensive way violence, nudity, sex, death, or bodily functions, material designated as for adults only, material which promotes or advocates illegal activities, material which promotes the use of alcohol or tobacco, school cheating, or weapons, or material advocating participation in hate groups or other potentially dangerous groups.
  - If you mistakenly access inappropriate information through the School Internet system, you are required to immediately report this access in the manner specified by your school. This will protect you against a claim you have intentionally violated this policy.
  - The school has installed filtering software to attempt to prevent access to inappropriate material.
    - If you feel filtering software is blocking your access to an appropriate site, report this to your teacher.
    - You are not allowed to seek to bypass the filtering software by using a proxy site or some other technology.
- Privacy and Communication Safety Requirements:
  - "Personal contact information" includes your full name, together with other information which would allow an individual to locate you, including your family name, your home address or location, your work address or location, or your phone number.
  - If you are an elementary or middle school student, you are not allowed to use the School Internet system to disclose your full name or any other personal contact information online for any reason.
  - If you are a high school student, you may disclose, through the School Internet system, personal contact information to educational institutions, companies or other entities for continuing education, professional or career development purposes with specific staff approval.
  - You are not allowed to disclose names, personal contact information, or any other private or personal contact information about other students. You are not allowed to forward a message sent to you privately without documented permission from the person who sent you the message.
  - You are required to promptly disclose to your teacher or other school staff member any message you receive through the School Internet system which is inappropriate or

makes you feel uncomfortable. You should not delete such messages until instructed to do so by a teacher or other staff member.

- Unlawful, Unauthorized, and Inappropriate uses and Activities:
  - Unlawful activities:
    - You are not allowed to attempt to gain unauthorized access to the School Internet system or to any other computer system through the School Internet system or go beyond your authorized access. This prohibition includes attempting to log-in through another person's account or to access another person's files.
    - You are not allowed to disrupt or attempt to disrupt the School Internet system or any other computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses, or by any other means, using the School Internet system.
    - You are not allowed to use the School Internet system to engage in any unlawful act, including but not limited to arranging the sale or purchase of drugs or alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, or threatening the safety of any person.
  - Inappropriate language:
    - Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to all speech communicated through the School Internet system, including public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages.
    - You are not allowed to use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language on the School Internet system.
    - You are not allowed to post information which could cause damage or a danger of disruption to your school or any other organization or person on the School Internet system.
    - You are not allowed to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks on the School Internet system.
    - You are not allowed to harass or bully another person on the School Internet system.
    - You are not allowed to post false or defamatory information about a person or organization on the School Internet system.
    - You are required to promptly disclose to your teacher or another school employee any message you receive on the School Internet system in violation of the restrictions on inappropriate language.
  - Plagiarism and copyright infringement:
    - You are not allowed to plagiarize works you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others, and presenting them as if they were yours, without proper attribution.
    - You are required to respect the rights of copyright owners in your use of materials found on, disseminated through, or posted to the Internet. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright.
  - Specific Activities prohibited:



- You are not allowed to download large files from or to any computer on the School Internet system unless absolutely necessary, and then only with approval of a teacher or another school employee. If necessary, and allowed, you may download large files when the system is not being heavily used; you are required to immediately remove the file from the School Internet system computer as soon as possible after appropriate copying or use.
  - You are not allowed to use Diocesan, school, or personal distribution lists or discussion groups for sending irrelevant messages.
- Discipline:
  - Violations of this Student Internet Use Policy can result in termination of the student's account, denial of access to the School Internet system, suspension, expulsion, or referral of matters to the appropriate law enforcement agency, depending on the severity of the actions. Such determination is within the sole discretion of the School and the Diocese.
- Limitation of Liability
  - Neither the Diocese nor school guarantees the functions or services provided through the School Internet system or its internet service provider will be without error. The Diocese and/or school will not be responsible for any damage you may suffer, including but not limited to loss of data, interruptions of service, or exposure to inappropriate material or people. The Diocese and/or school will not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through the School Internet system. The Diocese and/or school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the School Internet system. Your parents can be held financially responsible for any harm resulting from your use or misuse of the School Internet system. You may use the School Internet system only if your parents have signed a disclaimer of claims for damages against the school and Diocese.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

The goal of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is to develop the whole child: physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual. In order to promote the students' growth and development in all these areas, Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School offers a wide variety of extracurricular activities. These activities are made possible through the cooperation of parents, responsible staff or volunteers, and the students.

### **Athletics**

Athletic programs serve as a wonderful tool in the education of young people. Not only do they promote physical exercise and health, but they also reinforce values such as self-discipline, group cooperation, and sportsmanship. Our approach to athletics, their purpose and execution is outlined below:

- The primary purpose is to have fun and enjoy participating in an activity. We always strive to win, but it is not our main focus. Our most important victory is building self-esteem and the development of positive social skills, not scoring the most points.
- Students should strive to give 100% regardless of their ability, because this effort is the way to approach all situations in life.
- Arguing with or denigrating teammates is never tolerated.
- Referees and opponents are not enemies but are always to be treated with respect.
- Although not everyone plays an equal amount of time, all get to play—since it is not our policy to run up scores on opponents. In different games, different players receive more playing time.
- Academic grades and conduct are first priority, and students must strive to maintain good grades and conduct to be eligible for the team. (See the section on Extracurricular Eligibility.) Since parents give permission to play, they are free to remove their children if they are not satisfied with their grades or conduct.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct or failing to maintain a standard of conduct satisfactory to the school administration may result in the removal of a student from a team and denial of attendance at sports games and events for a period determined by the administration.
- Negativity destroys, and all are expected to keep a positive attitude.
- This spirit of respect, cooperation, and friendship applies to coaches, parents, and fans.

MTC participates in the Catholic Youth Association. Tryouts are held before each season. Teams are limited in their numbers, and determining who makes the team is left solely to the evaluation of the coach under the direction of the school's Athletic Director. The following after school sports are offered:

- Coed Soccer
  - Eligible Grade Levels: 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>
- Boys Track
  - Eligible Grade Levels: 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>
- Boys Basketball
  - Eligible Grade Levels: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>
- Boys Flag Football
  - Eligible Grade Levels: 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>
- Girls Volleyball
  - Eligible Grade Levels: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>
- Girls Basketball
  - Eligible Grade Levels: 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>

- Girls Flag Football
  - Eligible Grade Levels: 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>
- Girls Track:
  - Eligible Grade Levels: 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

**Required Forms to Participate in Sports:** To participate in any MTC sport during the school year, students must submit all of the following:

- Athletic Events Consent and Release
- Participation Health Screening (Physician signature required)
- Student Sports History Form
- Statement of Compliance

**Fee to Participate in Sports:** There is no fee to participate in the Catholic Youth Association Sports. However, there is a small uniform rental fee for each sport.

**Sports Eligibility:** Mother Teresa recognizes its obligations to develop and monitor academic performance and conduct to ensure student athletes realize team sports are a privilege. Participation in practices and games requires the maintenance of academic standards and appropriate behavior.

In order for students to maintain eligibility to participate in extracurricular sports activities, students must maintain at least a “C” average (70%) in all subjects and have a "3" for all ATLs and Conduct. Eligibility is checked at progress report and report card times. Students found ineligible at these times, will not participate in practices or games until they meet grading, conduct and/or ATL requirements. The ineligibility period runs from Sunday to Sunday of each week. The athletic director will inform the student athlete and notify the parents/guardians by email regarding eligibility status.

All students must demonstrate exemplary conduct during practices and games. Poor conduct at practices and/or games can result in ineligibility, suspension or expulsion.

The final decision of eligibility is at the discretion of the administration.

**Transportation for After School Sports:** It is the responsibility of the athlete and the parent(s) to arrange transportation for their child to and from practices and after-school sporting events. You are encouraged to make arrangements with other families in advance if you are unable to drive to an event. Mother Teresa of Calcutta coaches employed by the school will not be responsible for arranging car pools and are not allowed to transport athletes to and from games.

If you are releasing your child to another parent for transportation to or from an event, written permission is required and must be given to the Athletic Director or coach. Athletes should make face to face contact with the coach when leaving the event. Any player not picked up on time from practice and/or game may be dropped after a second incident.

## **Clubs and Organizations**

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School offers numerous activities and clubs geared to the varied interests and talents of its students. Some clubs are offered during the school day, while others are offered after school. There is a small fee for after school clubs and parents are expected to pick up their child promptly after the club is over. Children not picked up promptly, will be escorted to our aftercare program and a fee will be assessed. Clubs and organizations may include but are not limited to:

- Student Council
- National Junior Honor Society
- Sports Clinics
- Art Club
- Altar Servers
- Drama Club
- Liturgical Choir Club
- Chess Club
- Karate
- Safety Patrols
- Duke University Talent Identification
- Chinese Club
- Math Counts

## **Class Parties**

Class parties are only held at times that are agreed upon by the faculty and approved by the principal. Requests for funds for class parties are to be made solely by the school. Requests for additional funds for party expenses or teacher gifts are prohibited. School parties are to be no longer than one hour in length and may include simple and enjoyable activities or crafts. Birthday treats must be small treats that are easily served during the half hour lunch period, or when determined by the classroom teacher, and must include the entire class. Birthday treats can be dropped off at the office prior to 11:00 a.m. All birthday treats must be dropped off at the school office. Private party invitations may not be distributed in school unless all students in the class are being invited in order to avoid excluding others.

## **Eighth Grade Privileges and Graduation**

**Graduation:** Graduation is usually held in late May and is a public celebration of a student's completion of elementary school. Graduation occurs at a special Mass offered for the intentions of the graduates and their families. Graduation is a dignified ceremony celebrating the unique value of a Catholic education. Gowns are worn at the ceremony. A graduation fee is charged to cover rental gowns, the diploma and cover, organist, program, and flowers. A simple graduation reception will be held after the awarding of diplomas. Parents are asked to be inclusive of all students for all graduation festivities and to plan celebrations which are age appropriate. The school does not sponsor local or out of town trips or parties.

**Privileges:** Eighth grade students are able to participate in many privileges and activities to celebrate their status as leaders in the school. The privileges may include activities such as wearing a class t-shirt, eating lunch outside, etc. The participation in any privilege or graduation activity including the awards ceremony, class trips, eighth grade luncheon, and graduation ceremony will be dependent on the behavior of the student.

## **DISCIPLINE**

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The primary purpose of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is to provide a Catholic education in an environment permeated by the teachings of the Gospel. We support a positive approach to discipline where children are taught the value of making correct choices. We strive to create a climate of controlled and responsible freedom. Discipline is an aspect of moral guidance. Schoolwide and classroom rules are established for all students to follow. The goal of all discipline is ultimately self-discipline and character development. Linking consequences to behavioral choices helps develop these traits. Consequences of unacceptable behavior are not meant to punish, but to help students understand the implications of their choices. All students begin the school year on a 90-day probationary period in which to prove himself/herself socially, academically, and spiritually.

### **Code of Conduct**

#### **Student Expectations:**

- Every student is expected to act in a *Christ-like manner*.
- Every student is expected to be *respectful, honest and courteous*.
- Every student is expected to follow the *rules and policies* as given.
- Every student is expected to *communicate* in an appropriate manner with adults and peers. Uses of profanity or comments that are hurtful are not appropriate language.
- Every student is expected to *respect the personal boundaries and property* of others and school property.
- Every student is expected to *promote and support a safe, fun and healthy environment* through positive participation.

The Code of Conduct provides a guide for the behavior of the students and the consequences for failure to follow these guidelines.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Students in grades K through 8 are bound by school policies and regulations whenever they are on school or parish grounds and during all off-campus, school- sponsored activities. Consequences for inappropriate behavior vary according to the severity of the infraction, the age of the student, extenuating circumstances, and the frequency of the child's disturbance to the educational process. Actions other than those listed, which are considered to be contrary to the philosophy of the school or wellbeing of the school community, are also subject to disciplinary action. Consequences that may be employed for lack of cooperation with school rules are listed below. Middle School students are provided with a Student Conduct and Expectations Point Sheet. See the Middle School section under Conduct Reporting and Recording.

- **Level I – Disciplinary Action:** Inappropriate behaviors may warrant loss of minor privileges such as (but not limited to) recess time, group activities, extracurricular activities such as team sports, etc. Conferences may be conducted with the student, teacher(s), parent(s)/guardian(s), guidance counselor, dean of students, principal.
  - **Detentions:** After school detentions are an acceptable disciplinary measure. Parents will be notified if a student is to be detained. A detention results in 3 demerits. Detentions are served on

Wednesdays after school from 3:15 – 4:15 pm. In the event of an early dismissal or school holiday, another day will be specified to serve detentions.

- **Minor Detentions** (30 minutes)
  - Failure to follow directions
  - Violating classroom, cafeteria, or other rules
  - Going to class unprepared
  - Tardy to class
- **Major Detentions** (60 minutes)
  - Disrespect to teachers or administration
  - Disrespect to classmates
  - Defacing property
  - Cheating or copying assignments
  - Verbal or physical harassment
  - Failure to serve a scheduled detention
  - Fighting (including play-fighting or rough-housing)
  - Forging a parent or guardian signature
- **Level II – Disciplinary Action:** Continued or serious behavior problems may result in in-school or out-of-school suspension for a period of time, at the discretion of the administration. Suspension is the temporary removal of a student from the regular program. After a student receives two detentions in a trimester, their next offense will result in an In-School Suspension. If the student’s behavior does not improve, Out-of-School Suspension and/or Expulsion is considered. Class exclusion is a method of disciplinary action that denies a disruptive student the ability to attend particular classes or school. During this time of exclusion, the student is expected to work on class assignments.
  - **Class Exclusion (In-School Suspension):** In-School Suspension is ordinarily for a period of two days or less. During this time of exclusion, the student is expected to work on classroom assignments while under the supervision of other teachers, administration or staff members. The purpose of class exclusion is to place disruptive students for periods of time, in an appropriate, supervised, in-school environment where student learning can continue. Work assigned during this time is to be completed. Assessments will be made up at the convenience of the teacher, and credit will be given.
  - **Class Exclusion (Out-of-School Suspension):** Out- of -School Suspension is ordinarily for a period of two to five days. During this time of exclusion, the student is expected to work on classroom assignments while at home. Work assigned during this time is to be completed. Assessments will be made up at the convenience of the teacher, and credit will be given.
- **Level III – Disciplinary Action:**

In extreme cases, expulsion may be required.

  - **Expulsion:** Expulsion is the permanent exclusion of a student from a school. Various situations may lead to expulsion of a student from school. These include, but are not limited to, the following offenses:
    - Acts which, in the judgment of the school, endanger the moral, academic, or physical wellbeing of the student body.
    - Prolonged and open disregard for school policy and authority by the student and/or parent(s).
    - Prolonged disrespect of other students.

- Illegal acts as defined by law. The school may take disciplinary action regardless of whether or not criminal charges are brought.

Only the Principal, after consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, may expel a student. Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up to the date of expulsion.

### **Conduct Reporting and Recording**

Conduct demerits are recorded weekly on RenWeb. Demerits are also recorded on the Middle School Student Conduct and Expectations Point Sheet. The Middle School Conduct and Expectations Point Sheet is provided to all middle school students at the beginning of each trimester. This sheet should be attached to the inside of the student planner and brought to every class each day. Violations of the MTC Conduct Policy will result in a loss of points and will be recorded as demerits. Middle school students will be required to maintain a certain level of points in order to participate in school-sponsored events such as field trips, retreats, field days, school dances etc. The number of points required will be determined prior to each event and reported to the students. The receipt of three demerits during a trimester will result in a detention. The behaviors listed on the Student Conduct and Expectations Points Sheet are not intended to represent an all-inclusive list and the administration reserves the right to address other behaviors which affect the Christ-like environment of our school and the learning experience of others.

### **Respect for Persons and Property**

Students are entitled to be protected and have their property protected. Students shall not threaten, assault, or cause physical injury to others; they shall not steal, extort, misuse, or damage the property of others; they shall not handle, possess or transmit weapons, drugs, or anything that is harmful to others or themselves. Students who violate the above policy are subject to detention, suspension and/or expulsion.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is not used in the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

### **Illegal Substances (DBS File # 5131.7-5/83):**

Intoxicants or other controlled substances in any form, including, but not limited to, drugs, marijuana, beer, wine, or alcohol may not be brought, consumed, or utilized by a student on the school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity. A student shall not sell, possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Violators shall be subject to immediate expulsion as well as any action deemed appropriate by law enforcement for violation of any law.

By acceptance of enrollment, students, their parents or guardians consent to and authorize all reasonable action on the part of the school authorities to enforce this rule including, but not limited to, the utilization of searches, questioning, and other investigative tools.

Proper use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule.

### **Cell Phones/Smart Watches/Valuables**

Any cell phone brought to school must be turned off and remain in the student's backpack at all times, including after school sports and activities. If children must contact their parents, they are permitted to use the school phone. Any violation of this policy will result in the phone being confiscated and taken to the school office. Only the parent may retrieve the item from the office. Students are responsible for the safety of the phone and any other valuables brought to school. Kindles, tablets, smart watches and other technology from home are not permitted at school unless specific permission has been given by the principal.

### **Playground Rules**

The following rules should be observed on the playground:

- Students must stay in the areas assigned. All other areas are off-limits.
- Students will treat all equipment respectfully.
- Students are expected to respect and obey the staff on duty and abide by the rules of safety.
- Games such as tackle football and other physical games are not permitted.
- Students will show good sportsmanship in all games and activities.
- No obscene language is permitted.
- Students should ask permission to retrieve playground equipment that goes outside of the playground area.
- A teacher and/or an aide may assign a detention and/or a demerit to a student who fails to follow playground regulations.

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND CENTERS DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG**

The Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg (herein referred to as the "DOSP") and each school within the DOSP (herein referred to as the "School") are committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, spiritual, and respectful learning environment for all of its students. The DOSP and each School is committed to protecting its students from bullying and/or harassment. As such, bullying and/or harassment is strictly prohibited, will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action. Therefore, this anti-bullying policy prohibits any unwelcome physical, social, electronic, nonverbal, verbal or written conduct directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

- physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student
- damaging, exhorting or taking a student's personal property
- placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm
- placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or (5) creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities of the Catholic mission of the school; or (6) disrupting the orderly operation of a School.

**Definitions:**

The definitions hereunder apply to any student who either directly engage in an act of bullying and/or harassment, or who, by their behavior, actions and/or conduct, support another student's act of bullying and/or harassment.

**Bullying** is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying results in physical hurt or psychological distress of an individual. Bullying is unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior and/or actions, including, but not limited to, teasing, namecalling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, threatening, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, public humiliation, theft, destruction of personal property, physical violence, cyberbullying and cyberstalking.

**Harassment** means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific student, which causes emotional distress to that student and serves no legitimate purpose.

**Cyberstalking** means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicate words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication directed at a specific student, causing emotional distress to that student and serving no legitimate purpose.

**Cyberbullying** is the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a student through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, email, blogs, texting on cell phones, social websites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.) chat rooms and instant messaging. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital and/or electronic technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool.

**Course of conduct** means a pattern of conduct composed of a series of acts over a period of time, however short, which evidences a continuity of purpose.

**Scope/Expectations:**

The DOSP and each School expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and the educational purpose underlying all School activities. As such, the DOSP and each School prohibits bullying and/or harassment of any student:

- that occurs on school premises at any time.
- during any educational program or activity conducted by the DOSP or the School.
- during any school-related or school-sponsored program or event.
- that occurs on any bus or vehicle as part of any school activity.
- through threats and/or other communications made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored activity or program.
- though an incident of alleged bullying and/or harassment may occur off of the School's campus and may not entail threats of acts to occur during school hours, if a student's ability to receive an education or a School's ability to provide an education is significantly impaired, as determined by the School and/or the DOSP, disciplinary sanctions may be issued.

**Reporting Complaints:**

Each student, parent and/or any other members of the School's community has a duty to immediately report any incident of bullying and/or harassment to the School administrator. The administrator will provide the reporting party with the Bullying Complaint Report Form which must be completed, dated, and signed by the reporting party so that the School may initiate further inquiry and investigation, when appropriate.

**Disciplinary Action:**

Concluding whether a student's action, conduct, behavior or a particular incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on the facts and circumstances of each complaint, followed by the determination of disciplinary sanctions. Any student found to have violated this anti-bullying policy will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the School's and/or DOSP's sole discretion. False reports or accusations of bullying and/or harassment also constitute a violation of this anti-bullying policy and will subject the offending party to appropriate disciplinary action.

## MEDICAL

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Children are sent to the clinic when ill or have an emergency. The seriousness of the situation is then determined by the clinic and office staff (limited first aid may be given). The school will make every effort to inform parents if an accident or illness occurring at school needs care or observation at home. Every accident in the school building, on the school grounds, at school athletic sessions, etc., must be reported immediately to the person in charge and to the school office.

**Medications:** If a child has a special medical condition, this information should be filed in the school office together with instructions on how to proceed. Medications that are prescribed by a physician may be administered in school. Any medication to be administered in school must follow these guidelines:

- Prescription medications and over-the-counter medications will be administered in the office when a dosage is required during school hours *only* if the medication and the completed "Parent's Request for the Administration of Medication by School Personnel" form have been given to the office by the parents or legal guardian.
- Parent's Request for the Administration of Medication by School Personnel form [Click HERE](#)
- Medication *must* be delivered to the school office in the container in which it was dispensed by the pharmacist or purchased.
- A separate supply of medication *must* be kept in the school office. Medication will *not* be transported between home and school on a daily or weekly basis.
- The label *must* indicate the child's name, name of the medication, physician's name, dosage/amount, and time/frequency.
- If the medication requires equipment for administration (cup, spoon, dropper, etc...), the parent is responsible for supplying the equipment, labeled with the child's name.
- When medication is discontinued, or at the end of the school year, medications not taken home by the parent/guardian will be destroyed.
- Epi-Pen: Parents must complete the ["Authorizations for Emergency Injection for Severe Allergy" form](#) for request/permission for epinephrine to be given at school.
- Inhaler for Asthma: parents must complete the "Authorization to Carry Metered Dose [Inhaler for Asthma" form](#) to request and give permission for their child to be allowed to carry his/her MDI (Metered Dose Inhaler).

Whenever possible, medication schedules should be arranged so all medication is given at home. The same rule applies to the dispensing of over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, cough/cold medications and sore throat/cough lozenges. Any medication must be brought to the school by the parent or legal guardian. **For the safety and wellbeing of all students, we ask that students never transport medications or drugs. Serious consequences will follow for students who do not follow this rule.**

**Immunizations:** Catholic Schools within the Diocese of St. Petersburg require enrolling students to submit a Florida Department of Health Certificate of Immunization as provided for in Florida Statute 1003.22 as a condition precedent to acceptance. Catholic Schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg do not recognize a religious objection to this immunization. This policy was effective as of the 2011/2012 school year. An immunization record for every student is kept on file in the office.

**Health Screenings:** Vision, hearing and scoliosis screenings are available annually to applicable grades.

**Insurance:** Coverage for the school day and school events (outside regular school hours) is covered in the charges within the registration fee. This is supplemental insurance only and is not a substitute for the parents' primary insurance. It is a Diocesan requirement that all school children have insurance coverage. Twenty-four-hour coverage is available upon request for an additional premium. This policy runs from the beginning of the school year until the last day of student attendance. To file an insurance claim, the accident must be reported to the school office promptly following the accident. Claim forms are available in the school office and must be completed and returned to the school for mailing to the insurance company within 30 days of the accident.

**Accidents:** Accidents should be reported immediately to the person(s) supervising the children or to school office personnel (this is for insurance purposes). Failure to do so will result in NO insurance coverage from the school. Parents should thoroughly instruct their child(ren) in this procedure. Parents are notified of the accident when necessary, although it may not be necessary for the child to receive immediate medical care or leave the school. In extreme cases, paramedics will be called to render medical treatment.

## **DRESS CODE**

Uniforms are worn by all students at Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School. The uniform policy creates equality among students, and uniforms are worn both as a symbol of school unity and school pride. The wearing of uniforms is to be a cooperative effort among parents, students and staff. The school has the responsibility for maintaining an atmosphere conducive to learning, and uniforms serve to enhance that atmosphere. Students and parents share the responsibility for proper dress and grooming. If a part of the uniform is not worn, the student must present a written note from a parent or guardian. This note may be given to the office for approval and then returned to the homeroom teacher. Notes after-the-fact will not be accepted. If a student is not in regulation uniform, parents may be called to pick up the student. Although it is the homeroom teacher's duty to check their students daily for adherence to the uniform policy, any teacher may correct a student or issue a detention, a demerit and/or a uniform violation slip.

### **Uniform Vendor:**

The MTC uniform vendor is Risse Brothers School Uniforms (4228 N Armenia, Tampa). Risse Brothers School Uniforms offers a comprehensive website featuring a registration mechanism that will customize the site specifically to MTC for you when you log in. Please visit their site at <https://www.rissebrothers.com/index.cfm> or call them at 813-282-8338 for all school uniform ordering information.

### **Uniform Requirements:**

All clothing must be purchased from the uniform company and have the Mother Teresa of Calcutta logo and lettering.

### **Girls**

- K – 5<sup>th</sup> - Plaid jumper (no shorter than 2" from mid knee).
- 6 - 8<sup>th</sup> - Plaid skirt (no shorter than 2" from mid knee).
- Khaki pants or shorts (no shorter than 2" from mid knee).
- Royal or light blue polo shirts embroidered with the Mother Teresa of Calcutta logo.
  - o Shirts must be tucked in.
  - o No long-sleeved shirts may be worn under the polo shirts.
- White socks that cover the entire ankle without logos. No knee socks, tights, or leggings may be worn.
- Hair decorations: Bows, headbands, and scrunchies should be small (less than 3" for bows and 2" for headbands) in royal blue, light blue, white, khaki, navy, or school plaid. Bows, headbands, or ponytail ribbons that have been pre-approved for sale and purchased from the MTC Spirit Store are also acceptable.
- No personal monograms are allowed on school uniforms.

### **Boys**

- Khaki pants or shorts (no shorter than 2" from mid knee).
- Kindergarten boys only may wear Khaki shorts with elastic waist.
- Royal or light blue polo shirts embroidered with the Mother Teresa of Calcutta logo.
  - o Shirts must be tucked in.

- No long-sleeved shirts may be worn under the polo shirts.
- White socks that cover the entire ankle without logos.
- No personal monograms are allowed on school uniforms.

### **All Students**

- Shoes must be solid black leather or canvas shoes with black soles and buckle, Velcro, or tie. No slip-on shoes or high tops. Heels must be less than 1”.
- Belt: black leather. (Grades K through 2 may wear black canvas belt with magnetic fasteners.)
- Royal blue sweatshirt and/or royal blue fleece jacket with school logo.
- No altering of the uniform is allowed other than the adjustment of hem to the appropriate length. The embroidery of initials or names is considered altering the uniform and is not permitted. All name labels must be on the inside of apparel.
- Coats and jackets may be worn on extremely cold days. They must be worn over a school sweatshirt and taken off in the classrooms. Coats and jackets must fasten in the front with zipper or buttons.
- No sweatshirt -style hoodies are acceptable at any time.
- Winter hats and gloves (in a solid conservative color) may only be worn on extremely cold days and only outside of the classroom.
- No personal monograms are allowed on school uniforms

### **Physical Education**

- MTC gray shirt with blue shorts. MTC sweatpants and sweatshirts may be worn on cold days over the regular PE uniforms. Kindergarten students do NOT dress out for PE and will not need a physical education uniform.
- On spirit days or dress down days, students must have the PE uniform and appropriate PE shoes.
- For early dismissal days, the teacher will notify students whether the PE uniform will be required.

### **Spirit Day Attire**

Spirit Days take place throughout the year. On these designated days, the students may dress-down by wearing the current year’s spirit day shirt only. Properly fitted jeans, jean capris, school uniform pants, or school uniform shorts may be worn. PE uniform shorts are not permitted on spirit days. Jeggings are not permitted.

### **Appearance/Grooming**

Students are expected to look neatly groomed at all times. The administration reserves the right to determine what is neatly groomed.

**Hair Styles:** Students are expected to have neatly groomed, conservative hairstyles. Extreme hairstyles are prohibited.

- Boys:
  - Hair should be neatly trimmed above the eyebrow in the front.
  - Tapered above the collar in the back.
  - Hair should not be cut with less than #2 razor.

- No lines cut into hair.
  - No dying hair color.
  - Fad hairstyles such as spiked hair, shaved areas or any such extreme styles are not permitted.
  - When applicable, boys should always be clean shaven.
  - Girls:
    - Hairstyles should be conservative and in good taste.
    - No dying hair color.
    - No lines cut into hair.
    - Make up and nail polish are not permitted.
    - Fad hairstyles such as spiked hair, shaved areas or any such extreme styles are not permitted
- Hair decorations: Bows, headbands, and scrunchies should be small (less than 3” for bows and 2” for headbands) in royal blue, light blue, white, khaki, navy, or school plaid. Bows, headbands, or ponytail ribbons that have been pre-approved for sale and purchased from the MTC Spirit Store are also acceptable.

**Jewelry:**

- Wrist watch band must be smaller than one inch. No novelty or Smart watches.
- One thin small chain with one small religious medal or cross.
- Earrings – girls only – One pair of small post earrings.
- Ring – one small ring. No costume or distracting rings.
- No costume jewelry.
- Bracelets sold or issued by the school may be worn.

**Makeup:**

- Make-up, artificial nails, and nail polish are not permitted.

**Tattoos/Body Piercings:**

- Visible tattoos are not permitted.
- Visible body piercings are not permitted.

## **SCHOOL AND STUDENT SAFETY**

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Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students. To this end, the following safety procedures are in place on the MTC campus:

- All visitors to Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School must report to the school office to sign-in and obtain a visitor's badge. All guests that are not Safe Environment trained must be escorted by school staff while on campus.
- While on campus, all visitors are asked to use the restrooms in the office.
- No parent may attend a field trip or other such event without authorization from the school office. All chaperones, homeroom mothers, and HSA Board Members must be approved volunteers.
- In keeping with the Diocesan policy, Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School has procedures in place for handling emergencies (see below in this section). Parents and students are expected to follow the directions of the school in the event of an emergency.
- In a weather-related emergency, Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School follows the school closing guidelines from the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools.
- Safety procedures such as fire drills, lock downs, and tornado drills are routinely conducted throughout the course of the school year with the students.
- Mother Teresa of Calcutta abides by the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, which mandates training for individuals who come into contact with children and youth and to help recognize, report and prevent child abuse, including sexual abuse.
- Reporting of Child Abuse & Neglect: The state of Florida mandates to report all suspicions immediately to the Bureau of Child Protective Services. Under the directives of the State and the Diocese of St. Petersburg, we fully comply in the reporting of suspected child abuse.

**Inclement Weather Procedure:** Every adverse weather event is different, and weather decisions at MTC School may or may not be the same as those of other schools in the Diocese or the county. Circumstances permitting, Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School will attempt to relay closures via RenWeb Instant Alert; text, voicemail, email. We encourage you to make this your first source of school information during weather contingencies. The local media will remain a backup means of notification for inclement weather decisions. Ultimately, parents have the decision as to whether it is safe for their child to come to or be at school. If MTC School is not closed, and the child is not at school, he/she will be marked absent. If parents decide to sign their child out early, and school is still in session, he/she will be marked tardy.

**Emergency Procedures:** The Emergency Planning Committee of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School has developed emergency procedures for the school, as mandated by the Diocese. Various community resources, such as fire and police departments and the Office of Emergency Preparedness, have been consulted in the course of developing these procedures. Specific personnel assignments have been made, equipment has been procured, the school's emergency fire plan has been updated, and a quadrant map of evacuation areas has been developed. A yearly faculty review of the school's emergency procedures is conducted.

Emergency procedures include:

- Principal or designate will communicate to the faculty and staff an emergency code and sound alarm when an emergency occurs. If necessary, faculty and staff will evacuate children by class groups to fire drill area on school grounds or to more distant staging areas (1/4, 1/2, and one mile radius locations). Choice of staging area will be determined by the nature of the emergency

- If evacuation beyond school grounds is necessary, children will be escorted to the appropriate staging area. Principal or designate will attempt to notify parents via RenWeb Instant Alert; voicemail, text and email.
- In the event of a tornado warning southwest classrooms may evacuate to northeast classrooms. This is recommended due to typical southwest direction of tornado strikes.
- If a gas spill occurs, do not attempt to pick up your children by car or other motorized vehicle, as gas is highly explosive. Everyone must walk to evacuate.
- If a bomb threat occurs, no one will be permitted to enter the school building. Everyone will evacuate immediately. Cars will not be permitted to drive in and out of the school driveways and parking lots while a bomb threat exists.
- Parents are requested to keep calm, especially in the event of an emergency requiring pick-up of children at an evacuation area other than the school grounds. Please follow all directives of the principal, faculty, and staff in order to protect the safety of your children. Do not interfere with the general evacuation procedure in order to remove your own child or children. Remember that necessary emergency information will be communicated via RenWeb Instant Alert; voicemail, text and email.
- In the event we must move the children, it will depend on the location of an emergency as to whether we go north, south, east, or west.

**Environment Safety:** The maintenance department and the principal maintain the school's Asbestos Management Plan, Radon Testing Survey, and Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan.

## ***LUNCH PROGRAM***

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Students are permitted to bring lunch to school. As an alternative, we welcome WT Café as our food provider. Learn more about WT Café food and program at <http://wtcafe.com/parents/>

## ***PARENT INVOLVEMENT***

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Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School believes that all education of our students is a partnership with our families. We encourage parent involvement through our Parent Service Hour Program. As a faith community, our first instinct is to assume that each of us—teachers, administrators, parents, guardians and other care-givers—has the child’s best interest at heart.

### **Service Hours**

All families at MTC are required to perform service hours each school year. Families with one student must perform at least 10 hours; families with two or more students must perform at least 20. Typical service hour opportunities throughout the year include chaperoning field trips, helping in the cafeteria, and working at school events. Total required service hours may be fulfilled by assuming leadership roles, such as coaching, chairing an event, holding an HSA office, or serving as a homeroom parent.

To receive credit for service hours, volunteers must acquire from the front office a blue service hour coupon. It is the volunteer’s responsibility to complete the coupon and have it signed by the HSA event chairperson or, depending on the service performed, by the appropriate teacher or school department head. This coupon must be completed, signed and returned to the front office to ensure proper credit.

In addition to volunteering time, service hours also may be earned by purchasing items for the school, such as clinic, P.E. or classroom supplies. To receive credit for purchases, receipts must be attached to the completed and approved service hour coupon.

Each service hour is worth \$20, which means families who do not fulfill their service hour requirement will receive an invoice for any unfulfilled hours at the end of the school year. Service hours are nontransferable and do not carry over to the following year. Hours are earned for school events only; hours for parish-related events will not be accepted.

If a family is unable to fulfill the service hour obligation by May 1<sup>st</sup>, the family agrees to pay \$20 for each service hour not completed. Funds generated are used for school improvements.

### **Volunteer Policy**

A Diocesan background check and Safe Environment Training are mandatory for all volunteers in a student supervisory position. All volunteers at Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School must complete a "Level II" background screening (which includes fingerprints), Safe Environment Program training and other administrative items including the written volunteer application vetting process. No one may work with MTC children until references are processed, the Safe Environment Program training is taken, and a "Level II" background check has been completed. "Working with children" means being in a position to supervise the children. Traveling as a chaperone on a field trip is "working with children." Manning a booth at the Fall Fest is not "working with children" because the children are under the supervision of their own parents at such events. More information about how to become an approved volunteer can be found on our website.

A signature acknowledging you have read and agree to abide by this handbook indicates you have read and agree to abide by the policies and procedures governing volunteers.

## Drop Off & Pick Up Procedures

### Morning Drop off Procedures:

- 7:00 - 7:30 a.m. – Front gate opens for early drop off. Complimentary supervision is provided in the cafeteria.
- 7:30 a.m. – The front gate is opened for regular drop offs.
- 7:30 - 7:44 a.m. – Children report to their classrooms.
- 7:45 a.m. – Students are tardy to school.

Morning Parking: Due to limited parking, parents are asked to park on the grass.

Escorting Children to the Pod: Parents/guardians wishing to escort their child(ren) to the pod entrance must sign be Safe Environment approved and sign in at the school office. Escorting children to the classroom is prohibited.

### Afternoon Pick Up Procedures:

There are two ways parents can pick up their child(ren) from school. Either way, parents must always have their pick up tags with them. Pick up tags are distributed to parents at Open House. If more tags are needed, extra tags are available in the school office. The two ways for afternoon pick up are:

1. Carline:

- As you enter the school area, you will be greeted by a staff member instructing you as to what cone number to drive up to. Your child will be waiting for you at that cone. Please have your pick up tag visible at all times in the carline.
- Safety patrols and staff members will be at the cones to assist your child into your car. **CHILDREN WILL ENTER YOUR CAR FROM THE RIGHT SIDE ONLY. DO NOT GET OUT OF YOUR CAR.**

2. Walk Up:

- Parents wait in a line that wraps around the outside of the administration offices.
- When the parent reaches the front of the line, the parent gives a safety patrol runner their car pick up tag.
- Parents are then asked to exit the line and wait in the sectioned off grass area.
- The safety patrol runner will retrieve your child(ren) from the gated courtyard area and will bring him/her to their parent waiting in the grass area.
- The car pick up tag will then be returned to the parent.

### Rainy Day

Normal pick up procedures will be followed.

### Lightning Dismissal

All parents/guardians are to park in a grassy field. Once you have parked, and you believe it is safe to leave your car to pick up your child(ren), you can then proceed to the classroom for pick up.

**Buses/Nursery Vans/Car Pools:** Those who transport Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School students by bus, nursery van, and car pool are responsible for seeing that their vehicles are in proper condition, have appropriate insurance, and adhere to all local and state laws. Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is not responsible for any of the above since these vehicles are not owned or operated by the school or school personnel.

### **Custody Issues**

The school abides by the decisions of the court with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. When a court order is served, divorced or separated parents are required to provide the school office with a court-certified copy of the custody section of the court order. Parents are not to attempt to involve the school in their personal legal issues.

### **Messages for Students**

Messages will be delivered to students via the school office only in emergency situations. Parents should make any changes to normal routines before the school day begins, as the office cannot guarantee timely delivery of messages during the school day.

### **Updated Information**

Change of physical address, email address, and/or phone numbers, as well as other pertinent information, needs to be reported to the school office immediately. Emergency numbers are needed in case a parent cannot be located. Please be sure these names/numbers and local contacts are current. Permanent records, including health records, are kept up to date at all times. Parents are permitted by law to see the child's file at any time, provided ample notice is given to the enrollment coordinator or administrator(s).

### **Home and School Association**

The Mission of the Home School Association (HSA) of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School is to provide support through fundraising efforts for the purpose of enriching the educational experience of the students. By sharing individual gifts of time and talent, HSA Board Members serve as positive fundraising ambassadors for the school.

The 2017-2018 HSA Executive Board:

President: Samantha Chow

Vice President: Cathi Johnson

Recording Secretary: Jennifer Bless

Corresponding Secretary: Rhonda Hipkins

Treasurer: Tye Swenson

## Communication with Parents/Guardians

Communication between the school and the home takes place through a variety of ways:

- **Agendas:** The purpose of the agenda is to ensure that your child has communicated to you his/her assignments. Children are required to write down their homework assignments in their agenda and to have their agenda with them during all classes. The Middle School Student Expectation Sheet is to be stapled to all middle school students' agendas. This expectation sheet communicates to parents their child's conduct. If agendas are lost or damaged, a fee of \$8.00 will be assessed for replacement.
- **Friday Folders:** Children in grades K-5 bring home a folder every Friday that contains graded papers/tests/quizzes. Graded papers/tests/quizzes are returned to middle school students as soon as they are graded. Flyers and information from the office are usually distributed every Friday to the youngest or only child.
- **Email:** Please feel free to email the office or teachers with questions, comments, or concerns.
- **RenWeb:** The school communication system is RenWeb. Students' classroom grades are posted weekly.
- **Newsletter:** Our weekly newsletter is filled with valuable school information. If you are not receiving a weekly newsletter via email during the school year, please contact Mrs. DeMicheli at [vdemicheli@mtctampa.org](mailto:vdemicheli@mtctampa.org)
- **MTC Website:** Information is updated on a regular basis.
- **Parent-Student Handbook:** The Handbook contains the rules and regulations of Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School. It is the responsibility of both the parents/guardians and students to read and adhere to the contents of this handbook.
- **Open House:** Valuable information is shared during Open House Nights. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend.
- **Progress Reports:** Progress reports are emailed to parents at the halfway point in each trimester.
- **Report Cards:** Report cards are issued at the end of each trimester.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Conferences between parents and teachers are welcomed. Two days a year are officially allocated for Parent -Teacher Conferences; however, conferences can be arranged at other times during the school year by emailing the teachers. In the event that a problem arises concerning your child, every effort should be made to communicate with the teacher prior to contacting administration. Parents are requested not to call teachers at their homes or try to meet with teachers before, during or after school without an appointment. All teachers have assigned supervisory duties at those times.
- **Parent-Principal Conferences:** Any parent wishing to schedule a conference with the principal should email Mrs. DeMicheli for an appointment. The principal will be available for parent conferences by appointment and will address issues with parents promptly. Generally speaking, any student or class related issue should be addressed with the particular teacher before conferencing with the principal.
- **Home-School Committee Meetings:** Open Home-School Committee meetings are held periodically in the school cafeteria. The dates for these meetings are published in our weekly newsletters. These meetings are held in the school cafeteria.
- **Yearly/Monthly Calendar:** Published on the website and in the weekly newsletter. Please be advised that this calendar is subject to change.

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS, VOLUNTEERES, AND VISITERS  
OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG**

***“Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart”***

*-Psalm 139*

This **Code of Conduct** applies to all parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors who interact with our schools and Catholic Education in the Diocese of St. Petersburg. It also applies to all parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors who are present at school and school sponsored activities, meetings, and/or functions within and outside of school hours. As parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors, there is an expectation of support for the Vision and Mission of Catholic Education in the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

**Code of Conduct for  
Catholic Schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg**

The school is a multifaceted organization comprising a diversity of populations that have distinctive relationships to one another. Relationships are at the very core of our Catholic Christian belief in our Triune (three persons in one) God. The Holy Trinity is God in relationship! This beautiful doctrine inspires all of us in Catholic Schools, to attempt to be a living Christian community in relationship with God and others. It is essential in such a community that all members recognize and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities but also the rights and responsibilities of other members of the community and those of the school itself. “All rights have to be balanced by responsibilities because we are in relationship” (Putney, 2005).

The responsibility for promoting and upholding these core values of the school community must fall on all those with the greatest capacity to reason and control their actions. Therefore, it is the expectation of the school that all parents/guardians/caregivers/volunteers and visitors model acceptable behavior always within the school setting, at school sponsored activities or when the school can be involved in any social or professional media. “It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; and in fulfilling their duty, teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem” (*The Code of Canon Law*, Canon 796, Para. 2).

As a parent, celebrate that you play a foundational role in the development of your child's sense of justice, equity, and worth of all members of the school community. You are one of the most instrumental role models within your child's life. “Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators” (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 1965, para. 3).

This Code is designed to guide all stakeholders in their dealings with staff, other parents, students, and the wider school community. All staff and students at our Catholic schools are guided by similar codes. The Code is written in line with the school's values and expectations. The Code stands beside, but does not of course

exclude or replace, the rights and obligations of individuals under common law. All Catholic schools are private property owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg.

## **The Gospel and Our Values:**

We are called to emulate Jesus' call to love God and to love each other. We look to the values taught to us in scripture and the Christian belief to guide us, including: **Love** (1 John 4:7-19); **Promoting Life in Abundance** (John 10:10); **Inclusion** (Luke 19: 1-10); **Reconciliation** (Luke 15: 11-32); **Compassion** (Luke 10: 30-37); **Justice** (Matthew 25: 31-460); **Liberation** (Luke 4: 16-21); **Community** (John 15); and **Hope** (Luke 24: 13-35).

## **In living out these Gospel values, we strive to develop the following:**

- An inclusive approach including a non-judgmental and welcoming attitude towards all people
- An ability to appreciate the situation of others
- A cooperative attitude in working with others
- Open, positive and honest communication
- The ability to work civilly with other people
- Reverence for Creation
- Trusting relationships
- Responsible actions

## **As a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and/or Visitor, we ask that you:**

- Support in words and actions the philosophy of Catholic Education
- Work in trust with the school for the common goal of achieving what is best for all
- Support your child/ren in all educational endeavors by giving praise and showing interest in school activities
- Help your child/ren to discover that it is more the process that is experienced, rather than the end-product, that makes it all worthwhile
- Model flexibility – encourage healthy problem solving
- Respect the decisions made by the administration, even if you disagree with them.
- Help your child/ren to understand that ‘giving of your very best’ is what matters rather than always comparing yourself against the capabilities or achievements of others
- Listen to your child/ren, but remember that a different version of the event may be interpreted by others
- Understand the importance of a healthy parent/teacher/child relationship and communicate any concerns to your school in a constructive and appropriate manner
- Validate that both parents and teachers work together for the benefit of the child/ren
- Observe the school's policies, as outlined on the school webpage and/or the school's handbook and endeavor to support them in the home

- Cooperate where your child's behavior has overstepped accepted school standards, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, and follow specified protocol for communication with faculty/staff members
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- Cast off gossip and hearsay by communicating with the school and always model good manners for your child/ren
- Sustain a positive and co-operative attitude and interact positively with other parents and members of the school community
- Encourage community building with other parents in your year, level, and across the school
- Value the school community and its reputation especially when engaging with social media
- Do not smoke or use offensive language on school premises

## **Rights of a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:**

- To be treated with respect and courtesy by staff, students and other parents
- To be listened to, and clearly communicated with by the school, regarding your child/ren's education and development
- To have confidentiality over sensitive issues respected by faculty/staff
- To be treated in a caring and polite manner
- To have a timely response to concerns raised, usually within 24-48 hours
- To be treated with professionalism by all faculty/staff members

## **Responsibilities of a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:**

- Value and advocate for your school and its reputation. Be mindful of the hurt and damage social media may cause to faculty/staff members and other parents
- Under no circumstances approach another child while in the care of the school to address, discuss or reprimand them because of actions towards your own child/ren
- Respect the rights of faculty/staff members and other individuals
- Respect the reputation of teachers and be mindful of communications especially social media; e.g. tone of emails
- Follow the correct procedures to resolve a grievance or conflict, as outlined in the school's handbook
- Respect teachers' preparation time before, during, and after school. Make an appointment for long discussions at a mutually convenient time. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please do not expect a meeting unless pre-arranged
- To protect our children do not discuss any grievances or perceived failings in front of them regarding the school
- On excursions, helping in class or on campus, parents must follow the instructions and directions of the teacher. A parent may remind students of the rules but at no time issue consequences and should refer the student to the teacher if the behavior continues
- As valued members of the school community attend and participate appropriately in school liturgies or special events including athletics, concerts, academic and cultural events

## **Grievance Process for a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:**

Our Catholic schools want to work in partnership with our families. If anyone has a **current complaint, criticism, or concern**, it is expected the following steps be followed in the first instance:

1. Speak to the appropriate school person involved (e.g. class teacher) first and try to resolve the concern with mutual respect and clear communication. Where/if possible make an appointment with the relevant person. Follow the chain of command.
2. If for some reason this is not possible, then make an appointment to see an administrator, or other designated leadership personnel
3. The Administrator (or designee) should attempt to mediate and find resolution in the presence of both parties.
4. If, having followed Steps 1-3 with no satisfaction, you may complete the online form found on the website of the Diocese of St. Petersburg - Office of Catholic Schools and Centers for further facilitation.

**It is important to note that criticism regarding a faculty/staff member will only be heard if it is related to their professional conduct.**

*Deliberate breaches and inability to respect the Diocese of St. Petersburg – Office of Catholic Schools and Centers Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors, or exasperating complaints, may result in exclusion of a parent, guardian, caregiver, volunteer, and/or visitor from a school, and/or possible termination of enrollment of their child/ren.*

If your complaint relates to Sexual Abuse by a faculty/staff member towards a child in both an historical or current matter, you should, contact the statewide toll free abuse and neglect registry at 1-800-96ABUSE ( 1-800-962-2873) and/or law enforcement.

Parents, Guardians, and/or Caregivers, when signing off on accepting the school's policies in the Enrollment Application Form, and by the act of accepting enrollment at a Diocese of St. Petersburg Catholic School, are accepting of this Code of Conduct in its entirety.

*Excerpts of this policy have been used by permission of the Diocese of Townsville, AU.*

## ***COMPLIANCE WITH SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY***

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Parents who choose to send their children to Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School agree to follow and uphold all school policies. Enrollment verifies that the parent is aware of and will comply with all school regulations as contained in the handbook. As it is impossible to foresee all issues that may arise related to student behavior and choices, parents and student agree to abide by the spirit of the handbook as well as its specific guidelines. The school administration retains the right to amend the handbook at any time for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification when changes are made.