

ST. RITA SCHOOL

Parent Handbook

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ST. RITA SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

St. Rita School is a faith-filled community modeling Roman Catholic Christian values. We are committed to fostering the God-given gifts of each child.

In an atmosphere where faith and knowledge meet, our goal is to shepherd the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth of our students.

With God's unconditional love as their guide, we encourage our students to become world citizens, strong in their faith and respectful of diverse people, as they discover their place in the world.

ST. RITA SCHOOL BELIEF STATEMENTS

We at St. Rita School embrace the responsibility of providing a quality education within a caring Roman Catholic Community.

We believe we accomplish this with **J O Y** as our focus – **J**esus, **O**thers, and **Y**ourself.

We believe we challenge our students to learn to make choices based on Christian values. We encourage our students to lead by example, reach out to others, maintain the highest academic standards, and live their faith.

We believe our school community of teachers, staff, and families provide a nurturing atmosphere enabling our children to recognize their own uniqueness. In doing so, we allow them to reach their fullest potential.

We believe our students leave St. Rita School richly gifted as empathetic, responsible, intelligent, faithful followers of Christ.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

1. St. Rita School admits students of any race, color, creed, nationality, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available at the school.

The order of acceptance is as follows:

- a. Children of families who already have children in the school
 - b. Children of parishioners of a Diocese of Rochester Catholic Parish
 - c. All others as space permits
2. Families are expected to comply with tuition and fee payments. Inability to pay the entire tuition should not be seen as a deterrent to admission. Tuition assistance is available through the St. Rita School Fair Share Fund and Annual Appeal funds.
 3. The Principal and faculty will determine academic requirements for admission. Children entering Grades 1-5 will have records reviewed prior to admittance, and testing will be done when deemed necessary.
 4. Children entering Kindergarten may be screened for readiness in June prior to entrance. New York State Law requires children entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before by December 1st of the year entering Kindergarten. Similarly, children entering Pre-Kindergarten 4 must be 4 years old on or

before December 1st of the year they enter Pre-Kindergarten 4. The same rule applies to Pre-Kindergarten 3. (As well as being potty-trained.)

5. Application for our programs generally begins in February. A \$125.00 non-refundable family registration fee is required at the time of registration. At the time of registration parents are asked to provide:
 - a. Proof of age
 - b. A Baptismal certificate
 - c. A completed application and registration information form for the child
 - d. A tuition payment plan form
 - e. A Transfer of Records request if the child attends school elsewhere

IMMUNIZATION

The Diocese of Rochester follows New York State Public Health Law Section 2164. As part of the registration packet, families are provided with specific immunization requirements and may also be provided at any time upon request. Prior to admittance, necessary immunization and health records must be submitted.

LEAD TESTING FOR PRE-SCHOOL STUDENTS

All pre-kindergarten students must provide documentation of lead screening at the time of enrollment.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Our curriculum is unique to the individual teacher and school as it integrates our faith and includes all teaching and learning experiences. All curriculums in our schools meet and/or exceed the minimum learning standard requirements set forth by New York State. Teachers are expected to use a variety of resources to devise lesson plans and tailor instruction to the individual needs of their students. Teachers of all subject areas are encouraged to collaborate to show the connection between subject areas and allow for students to apply knowledge and skills in preparation for college and careers.

Religion is also taught as a core subject as well as integrated into all subject areas and aspects of the school day. Prayer occurs multiple times daily and the integration of religious values within other subject areas is the constant responsibility of all faculty and staff.

Shared Expectations for Excellence in Development guides curriculum and instruction in our schools. The document is available online at the Diocese of Rochester Department of Catholic Schools' website (www.dorschools.org)

- Along with formal Religion classes, students live their faith through daily prayer and participation in liturgies and prayer services, following the Church's liturgical year.
- Students take part in outreach to the community by providing service to the needy and the elderly.
- The independent reading program encourages each student to read independently at his/her own level.
- When teachers are available, after school music lessons are provided for a fee.
- A foreign language program is offered at cost after school when available.
- Chromebooks, computers, software, and Interactive White Boards are available for student use in the classrooms and/or in the Media Center.

- The academic program is enhanced with field trips, guest speakers, and various types of performances.
- All Grade 3-5 students are members of the Passport Club. Each month they learn the locations of various countries and their capitals around the world.

ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is an integral part of the school process. It should provide the following:

- Reinforcement of classroom learning
 - Opportunities for independent and responsible behavior
 - An element of success for the child
1. At St. Rita School, the following policy regarding homework is in effect:
 - a. Homework is to be completed in a neat and thorough manner.
 - b. Students will be expected to bring in the work for review in class, turn the assignments in when requested, and be prepared for quizzes.
 - c. Teachers will provide for individual differences when it is possible.
 - d. Homework assignments will be one dimension of the grades on the report card.
 2. St. Rita School parents' responsibilities regarding homework are as follows:
 - a. Check the student's agenda planner to be informed of assignments.
 - b. Parents are encouraged to assist with homework but NOT do the homework. Children may make errors but that is part of the learning process.
 - c. A child always has homework -- a book to read or practicing reading words and math facts. These are not necessarily written in the planner.
 - d. Monitor time – see the schedule below.

Homework includes both written and study assignments. Ordinarily, the following time limits are suggested:

Grades 1 and 2	10 – 20 minutes (no longer than 30 minutes)
Grade 3	20 – 30 minutes (no longer than 45 minutes)
Grades 4 and 5	40 – 50 minutes (no longer than one hour)

A good rule of thumb is 10 minutes times the grade level of the child. If your child is spending longer than the recommended time, please notify your child's teacher.

TESTING

A school-testing program is designed to measure, as well as possible, the degree to which each pupil has achieved the knowledge, skills, and understanding contained in each subject's curriculum. Testing not only indicates the areas of strength and weakness in a student, but also helps the school evaluate its own programs. The testing program at St. Rita School includes:

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Formative assessments occur frequently throughout each unit of study during the school year. Formative assessments take a variety of forms as they comprise all types of in-class assessments that are not summative assessments. A “traditional test” can be used as a formative assessment in preparation for the summative assessment.

Each subject area and area grade level consists of predetermined units of study, with a summative assessment at the conclusion of each unit. Summative assessments come in a variety of forms in order to ascertain students’ enduring understandings. Project-based applications of knowledge and skills are encouraged when possible, but there is also value to “traditional tests” when properly designed and appropriately used.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

1. New York State has an assessment procedure to evaluate the students in Mathematics and ELA. Students in Grades 3 through 5 take State prepared tests in these subjects in the Spring.
2. New York State has an assessment procedure to evaluate the programs in Science. Students in Grade 5 take a State prepared test in Science in May/June.

ACCEPTANCE OF STUDENT WORK

All assignments and/or class work should be done in quality penmanship.

- Answers should be written in complete sentences.
- Excessive crossing out should be avoided.
- Attention should always be paid to spelling.

Teachers send home weekly or bi-weekly folders (Kindergarten – Grade 2) with students’ work so that the parents may see and monitor the progress being made. Parents will normally be asked to sign tests in Grades 3 – 5.

REPORT CARDS

PRIMARY GRADES (K-2)

In Grades K-2, emphasis is placed on individual as well as age-appropriate development. The learning environment provides experiences which enrich all aspects of a child’s life. Curriculum content is designed to be integrated and sequential. Teachers determine a Progress Report marking code by multiple means of assessment.

Progress Report Cards are distributed at *each* of the four marking periods for grades K-2 (November, February, April, June).

MARKING CODES ACADEMIC MAJOR CONTENT AREAS (GRADES K-2)

- E -** Exceeds Grade-Level Diocesan Standards
- M -** Meets Grade-Level Diocesan Standards
- W -** Working toward meeting Grade-Level Diocesan Standards
- N -** Not yet meeting Grade-Level Diocesan Standards
- X -** Not evaluated at this time

MARKING CODES FOR LEARNER BEHAVIORS (GRADES K-2)

- E -** Exemplary
- S -** Satisfactory
- I -** Improving
- N -** Needs Improvement

LEARNER BEHAVIORS ASSESSED (GRADES K-2)

- Displays Christian values
- Demonstrates respect for others
- Demonstrates responsibility for actions
- Works well with others
- Exhibits organizational skills
- Completes assigned work in a timely manner
- Consistently applies effort
- Uses class time effectively
- Follows directions and is attentive

GRADES 3-5

In Grades 3-5, a numeric grade is given on the report card for each marking period and assesses the student's achievement in three areas of learning:

55%	Testing:	tests, quizzes, in-school projects, presentations
35%	Classwork:	guided practice, independent and cooperative learning, participation
10%	Homework:	homework, home-study skills

The passing grade for subjects in Grades 3-5 is 65%.

MARKING CODES FOR LEARNER BEHAVIORS (GRADES 3-5)

- E** Exemplary
- S** Satisfactory

I Improving
N Needs Improvement

LEARNER BEHAVIORS ASSESSED (GRADES 3-5)

- Displays Christian values
- Demonstrates respect for others
- Demonstrates responsibility for actions
- Works well with others
- Exhibits organizational skills
- Completes assigned work in a timely manner
- Consistently applies effort
- Uses class time effectively
- Respects the dress code

DETERMINING MARKING CODE FOR SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Art, Educational Technology, Music and Physical Education

Certain subjects are taught once or twice a week such as Art, Music, Physical Education, and Educational Technology. Emphasis is placed on participation, class performance, and independent and cooperative learning. Integration of these special subjects with the core curriculum is a goal.

Multiple forms of assessment, appropriate for the particular subject area, age, and grade are used to determine the Progress Report marking code.

In order to provide adequate class time for assessment of student achievement, special subjects are graded on the Progress Report Card at the end of the second (January) and fourth (June) marking periods. These teachers are able to make comments for the other two quarters.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

One Parent-Teacher Conference per student is **required** in November. If you wish to confer with the teacher and/or Principal about your child's progress at times throughout the school year other than scheduled parent-teacher conferences, we will be glad to accommodate you. We encourage you to contact the School Office for an appointment with the teacher or Principal.

Please do not come to school expecting to meet or conference with a teacher without first setting up an appointment.

INTERIM REPORTS

Interim reports are used to formally inform parents of areas of academic concern. The reports will be sent home to the students' parents approximately five weeks into the marking period. They will be sent in the following circumstances:

- Anytime a student is not meeting teacher expectations
- Anytime a student is not working to his/her ability

These reports should not be the only means of communication between home and school. Parents are urged to monitor work more closely than these reporting procedures do. The agenda planner should be checked daily. Always look for tests to sign.

PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY

It is the policy of St. Rita School to promote or retain a student at any given grade level in order to provide opportunities for successful performance and learning.

The school staff makes a major effort to appraise pupil strengths and areas of concern, then plans programs accordingly. At any grade level, K-5, students may need to be retained. The criteria for grade advancement according to Diocesan Policy is as follows:

1. Satisfactory completion of academic studies according to grade level
2. Pupils whose scores are below the prescribed grade level with the assistance of available remediation or supportive programs but whose classroom performance, homework, and growth during the year indicate consistent effort

In addition to the above factors, the following would also be considered:

- a. Emotional, physical and psychological well-being of the child
- b. Family considerations
- c. Previous retention and previous school records
- d. Availability of remedial or enrichment programs in the school or district
- e. Consultation with the parents

Parents have the right to request that a child move to the next grade, in which case the student would be transferred. They must write a letter to that effect which is placed in the child's file.

AVAILABILITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

Consistent with the provisions of the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974," official records, files, and data directly related to their children are available to parents.

Parents may have access to school records upon request. We ask that you notify the school principal 24 hours in advance, either in writing or by telephone. Arrangements will be made for you to review these records in the School Office.

Such records are confidential and may not be released or made available to persons other than parents and students (over 18) without the written consent of such parents or students.

Exceptions to this rule include:

1. Other professional personnel of the same school who have legitimate interest
2. Officials in a school to which a child is transferring
3. Authorized representatives of Diocesan and State Education Departments
4. Pursuant to court order or subpoena, after notification to parents
5. In emergency situations, to those who need information to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals

Either parent has the right to a child's record. In separation or divorce cases, access can be granted to both natural parents, unless there is a Court Order to the contrary. (Diocesan Policy)

TRANSFER OF RECORDS

Upon receiving a formal request from the school to which a student is transferring, the following records will be sent:

1. Academic records
2. Grade placement
3. Attendance and health records

Records which are outdated or opinionated are not transferred. **Since this information is confidential, it is never given to a parent to take to the school.** Parents are notified that copies of the transferred records are available to them at their expense.

No records may be transferred if tuition payments are not current.

COMMUNICATIONS

YOUNGEST CHILD FOLDER

Once the school begins, the youngest child from each family will bring home a folder every week on Wednesday. These folders need to be signed and returned by parents as soon as possible after reviewing the contents and responding where appropriate. This is our main system of communication between home and school. A monthly newsletter and calendar distributed through the Youngest Child folder provide information about upcoming school events and deadlines.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

The St. Rita School website provides a variety of information, including the School Calendar, Monthly Newsletter, Parent Handbook, Parent Association Committee (PAC) information, Uniform Policy, Registration information, Classroom pages, and forms. Accelerated Reader lists may also be viewed. Visit the school's website at: <http://stritawebster.org/school>.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

High standards of conduct are an important goal in Catholic schools. At St. Rita School we encourage a Christian community where students and staff:

- respect the uniqueness of each person
- develop an increased sense of respect for oneself and others
- create an atmosphere that enables students to grow in self discipline

Discipline must be a joint effort of the school, the parents, and the students. It is to be administered with consistency and fairness to ensure that each child is given the opportunity to fulfill his/her potential unhindered by the disruptions or infractions of others.

Each teacher will clearly define the expectations of classroom behavior. All students have the responsibility to abide by the rules. Although it is expected that each teacher or adult given charge of students will handle classroom discipline, if persistent or serious infractions occur, a student may be referred to the Principal.

The Principal is the final resource in all disciplinary situations and may waive any regulations for just cause at his/her discretion.

A student may be required to remain in school during the Lunch Recess to complete class work or homework. The agenda planner will be stamped when a child has served a detention. If it is necessary for a teacher to detain a student after school for behavioral or academic reasons, parents will be contacted.

DIGNITY FOR ALL STUDENTS ACT – THE DIGNITY ACT

St. Rita School adheres to the New York State’s Dignity for All Students Act (“The Dignity Act”) which seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying on school property, a school bus and/or at a school function. All Diocese of Rochester Catholic Schools have implemented the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, which is based on over 35 years of research, dedicated to effecting positive change at schools by utilizing four essential social environments: community, school, classroom, and individual. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program effectively trains our school leaders and school teachers on the latest research regarding bullying and effective methods to prevent it and address it. Diocese of Rochester Schools have pledged to eliminate bullying as best as possible by not only posting and enforcing school wide rules against bullying, but by applying our key instrument: involving parents.

CARE OF PROPERTY AND MATERIALS

Respect for school property (desks, bathrooms, equipment, etc.) is expected of all students attending St. Rita School. Students deliberately misusing property will be disciplined at the discretion of the administration. It is important that children learn to value and be responsible for the many material goods available to them.

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property. Money should be sent to school in an envelope properly marked with the student’s name and designated use. Articles of value should not be left in school overnight.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER NETWORK & INTERNET POLICY

It is the policy of St. Rita School to require the ethical use of the Internet and related technologies by all employees, volunteers, and students as set forth below in the “St. Rita School Acceptable Use of the Computer Network and Internet Policy.” Access privileges may be revoked, administrative disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action taken for any violations that are unethical and may constitute a criminal offense.

Internet Terms, Conditions, and Regulations

1. Acceptable Use:

Use of the Internet and related technologies must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of St. Rita School. Use of other organizational networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for these networks.

2. Unacceptable Use:

Transmission of any material in violation of any national, state or Diocesan policy or law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyright materials, threatening, violent, or obscene material or material

protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement, unauthorized chat or chain letter communication or political lobbying is also prohibited. Other examples of unacceptable information are pornography, information on bombs, inappropriate language and communications, flame letters, or like material.

Acts of vandalism are prohibited. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, or to damage hardware or software. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. Unauthorized use of another's computer, access sign-on and/or password and/or accounts, and/or files is prohibited.

3. Privileges:

The use of the Internet and related technologies is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges. Each user, who is provided access to Internet and related technologies, will participate in a discussion with assigned staff person(s) concerning the proper use of the network. The faculty, staff, or parent/guardian may request the administrator or designee to deny, revoke, or suspend a specific user access to the Internet and related technologies due to unacceptable use.

4. Warranties:

The educational programs governed by St. Rita School make no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing and will not be responsible for any damages users suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet and related technologies are at the user's own risk. The educational program governed by St. Rita School specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

The computer user will be responsible for any financial obligation incurred through the use of Internet and related technologies that are not previously approved as part of the local budget.

Acceptable Student Use of the Computer Network and Internet Policy **Rules and Responsibilities:**

Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of school-related libraries, databases, and research media. While St. Rita School's intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access objectionable material as well. St. Rita School believes that educational benefits to students from accessing the Internet, in the form of information, resources, and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages.

To that end, St. Rita School has set the following standards for acceptable student use of on-line information sources via the Internet.

1. Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks, just as they are in the classroom. Communications on the network are often public in nature. The Internet network is provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others as a regular part of the curriculum. Access to Internet network services is given to students who agree to act in a responsible manner. Parental permission is required, and access is a privilege - not a right.
2. Network administrators and teachers may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are employing the system responsibly. Network storage areas will be monitored regularly. Users should not expect that files used or stored on school computers or servers would always be private.
3. Access to information will be honored within reason. During school hours, teachers will guide students toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families bear the same responsibility as they would when guiding their children with information sources such as books, periodicals, television, telephones, movies, radio, and other potentially offensive media.
4. The following list describes behaviors and/or actions that are not permitted. The Principal, as school administrator, has final authority to determine what behaviors and/or actions are unacceptable:
 - Sending, displaying, or downloading offensive messages or pictures;

- Using obscene language;
 - Harassing, insulting, or threatening others;
 - Damaging of computer systems or computer networks;
 - Violating copyright laws;
 - Submitting documents from the Internet as a student's personal work;
 - Using another person's sign-on and/or password;
 - Trespassing in someone else's folder, work, or files;
 - Intentionally wasting limited resources;
 - Using the network for commercial purposes;
 - Revealing a personal phone number, name or address of one's self or another.
5. Violations will result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary action as determined by the school principal.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE/CELL PHONE USE POLICY

If a student brings an electronic device or cell phone to school, it must remain in their backpack throughout the **ENTIRE** day to include recess/lunch time and the AfterCare program. Readers are acceptable for use during appropriate times as approved by teacher/adult supervisor. Neither the Diocese of Rochester nor St. Rita School is responsible for any electronic items brought to school; including cell phones, iPods, or any other digital equipment. All electronic communication devices are subject to the harassment policy.

NON-VIOLENT TOY POLICY

St. Rita School promotes a safe and peaceful environment. Any toy, action figure, game or book that is violent in nature or content is prohibited from entering St. Rita School. Toy guns of any form (s squirt gun, foam dart gun, etc.) is included as well.

HARASSMENT IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SETTING

We support the belief that all teachers, staff and students are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, and to learn and work in a safe environment free from harassment. We strictly prohibit any conduct that constitutes harassment and reserve the right to discipline any person found guilty of such conduct.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Under the New York State Child Protective Services Act, school personnel who “suspect that a child coming before them in their professional capacity is being abused or neglected are *mandated* to report their suspicion.” We at St. Rita School are legally and morally bound to make such reports and would contact the Monroe County Department of Social Services.

PREGNANCY POLICY

The Catholic Elementary Schools of the Diocese of Rochester maintain a pastoral approach to ministering to the needs of female and male students involved in a pregnancy as well as to their families. Each such case shall be treated individually and the educational leaders of the school (Pastor and Principal) will determine the proper method of schooling after consultation with the student, parent(s), doctor and counselor (e.g., guidance, family life and school nurse).

SUSPENSION

Short-term suspension is the responsibility of the Principal. This action will be taken when, in the judgment of the Principal, a serious infraction of the school's policy has occurred, and/or a student's behavior is detrimental to a constructive learning atmosphere.

Generally this will involve an in-school suspension. This will mean that the student will report to school and will be responsible for all schoolwork, but will not be allowed access to the classroom or classmates. The student will complete the day in isolation under the supervision of the Principal or designated authority. The Principal, following a conference with parents, will determine re-admittance to the classroom.

EXPULSION

In an extreme case, where other measures have brought no results, expulsion from St. Rita School may be necessary. Expulsion is to be decided by the Principal in conjunction with the Pastor and the Superintendent.

A report recording the incident(s) leading to the expulsion and the communications relative to the decision are kept in the files of the local school.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

Any student in St. Rita School who is using, selling, giving, or dealing drugs or alcohol to other students in school or at a school-sponsored event is liable to expulsion. He/she will be suspended immediately and a conference among student(s), parent(s) or guardian(s), School Administrator, and Pastor will be arranged soon after the student has been caught selling, giving, using, or dealing with such substances. After the conference the Principal will assign, in addition to counseling, a suitable punishment which may include probation or expulsion. (Diocesan Policy)

The use of alcohol and smoking on school grounds is not permitted. This includes any school function, CYO sporting event, Scouting event, etc.

WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PREMISES

No implement that can be construed as a weapon (e.g., toy guns, knife, large stick, etc.) will be allowed on school premises.

It is the Administrator's responsibility to decide, in accordance with the seriousness of the offense, just what action will be taken if any weapons are found. This process may include in-school suspension, parental contact and/or contact with an outside agency such as police or protective services. (Diocesan Policy)

Possession of certain weapons (guns, knife) will be reported to the local police department.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are an essential part of the total school program. You have made a conscious choice to send your child to St. Rita School. That means you have considered the options open to you and have chosen our school as the one that will provide the best education and learning environment for your child. It is only right having made this important choice that you become as actively involved as possible in the school.

There are a number of possibilities open to you.

Parent Association Committee (PAC)

Through long range planning, the St. Rita School Parent Association Committee's responsibility is to work to promote the mission of St. Rita School. The committee also serves as a consultative body to the Principal by assisting him/her in organizing school events/activities. In doing so, the committee also works to assure the enhancement and enrichment of school programs.

PAC is comprised of five sub-committees, Academic Service, Community Development & Fundraising, School Publicity, and Special Events. Each of these sub-committees meets monthly; parents are welcome to attend these meetings.

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT (C.A.S.E.)

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People in 2002 required that each Diocese of the United States initiate specific actions to create safe environments. Bishop Salvatore Matano and the Diocese of Rochester have adopted the following policy.

Volunteers who work with children, youth or vulnerable adults are required to sign a Diocese of Rochester Volunteer Code of Conduct, complete the Criminal Record Check process and participate in *Creating a Safe Environment* training. (The Criminal Record Check includes Social Security number verification, Department of Corrections check and Sex Offender registry check for each state in which the volunteer has resided in the last seven years.)

Creating a Safe Environment certification training is done online. This information can be found on our school website. Please contact Parish Office if you have any questions. St. Rita School/Parish volunteers working with and/or accompanying children (e.g. classroom volunteers, field trip chaperones, lunch monitors, room parents, Scouting volunteers, CYO sports volunteers, etc.) are required to complete this training.

PARENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

St. Rita School has an active volunteer program. Many of the activities which go on as a part of the school day wouldn't happen as well, or in some cases at all, without the aid of parents. A volunteer sign-up form will be sent home each September and January.

Parents are involved in working in the Library, Media Center, Art room, coaching in the sports program, aiding teachers in and out of the classroom, and in a variety of student activities. Parents serve as Room Parents providing a great deal of assistance to teachers. Parents also provide service by working with other committees in the school and parish.

The presence of parents in the school is always welcomed and appreciated. Always stop at the School Office when you are in the building during school hours to get a visitor's pass. Please also be mindful of classes in session. Do not enter a classroom until the teacher invites you in. If you have a special skill or some time to share, please let us know. We certainly have a place for all those who are interested.

FIELD TRIPS

The classroom teachers schedule field trips at various times throughout the year. They are an integral part of the learning process. The proper permission form, which releases the school from liability, must be submitted to allow a student to go on a field trip. Notes or telephone calls *cannot* and will not be accepted as a substitute for the proper permission form. All chaperones for field trips must have completed the *Creating a Safe Environment* workshop. Transportation for all field trips will be by bus, provided by Webster Transportation Department.

CHAPERONE GUIDELINES FOR FIELD TRIPS

These guidelines are to insure the safety of our students while on a school approved field trip.

1. Siblings or other children are not allowed to go along with you.
2. Please refrain from using your cell phone and other electronic devices during the field trip
3. Please do not purchase any food or gifts for your group. We want all the students to have the same field trip experience.
4. Please abide by the teacher's instructions at all times.
5. Parents chaperoning for a field trip must have completed the *Creating a Safe Environment* workshop.

SCHOOL ROUTINE:

SCHOOL HOURS

Grades K-5:

The first bell rings at 7:50 a.m. Students should not be dropped off before this time. Classes begin at 8:00 a.m.

Kindergarten	8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Grades 1- 5	8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Half-Day (Early Dismissal) Session	8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Pre Kindergarten:

Pre K am	8:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.
Pre K extended day	8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Arrival time for PreKindergarten is between 8:30 a.m. and 8:40 a.m. Since our PreKindergarten is an academic program that follows New York State's foundational skills for the Learning Core Standards, students must be ready for class no later than 8:45 a.m. **We are not a Day Care/Pre School that may allow flexible arrival times.**

PARKING

1. Parents are asked **NOT** to use the bus loop in front of the school during the following times:
Mornings: 7:30 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.
Afternoons: 2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
2. If you are stopping to pick up a child for an appointment or to drop something at the Office, you may park in front of the school in the bus loop (**on the grass side**) unless it is during the above mentioned times, when there is **NO PARKING ALLOWED**. Please use the parking lot near the Library during those times. Please do not park in the first three spaces at the end of the sidewalk in front of the Library.

TELEPHONE CALLS

It is NOT policy to call parents for forgotten items, permission slips, lunches and transportation changes. We wish to help the children to be responsible for their needs. If parents bring lunches, homework assignments, coats, hats, boots, etc. to school, they should inform the Office Staff and leave item(s) in front of the School Office for the **student** to pick up.

Calls will be allowed by the discretion of the Principal and Office Personnel ONLY FOR EMERGENCIES.

ATTENDANCE

Regular student attendance is an integral factor in maintaining a quality educational program and is one of the most powerful factors of a student's success in school.

Please email school at sritadcs@dor.org or telephone the School Office at 671-3132 to report absences between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. Please leave a message on the answering machine or speak with a member of the Office Staff. The message should contain the following information:

Child's name
Nature of illness
Homeroom teacher
If class work is to be sent home (with whom)

Excused absences are defined as:

- Sickness
- Serious family illness
- Death of a family member of close friend
- Religious
- Medical or Dental Appointment
- Court
- Approved school-related program

Upon returning to school, New York State requires that a note be sent to school as documentation from a parent or guardian when a child is absent for any reason.

New York State also requires that if we do not receive a note, your child's absence will be marked "*illegal.*"

CHANGE OF INFORMATION

It is very important that we have your correct address and telephone number. Please notify the school at once when there is a change in your address or telephone number at home or work. This is important should an emergency arise. Parents are required to notify the Principal when a child will be attending another school for any reason.

LATE ARRIVAL (After 8:00 a.m.)

If a child is going to be late for any reason, the School Office is to be notified as soon as possible. The child must be signed in at the School Office by the person bringing him/her to school. **A specific reason for late arrival is required.** A note explaining the tardiness must be submitted to the teacher. Tardiness due to a late bus is automatically excused.

EARLY DISMISSAL

A written request from the parent or guardian must be brought to the teacher or the School Office on or before the day that early dismissal is desired. It is mandatory that the parent or a person designated by the parent come to the School Office to sign the student out. A specific reason for early dismissal is required. This is required even if the student will be returning to school that day. If the student does return, he/she must be signed in by the parent or guardian.

TRUANCY

Any student absent from school without parental knowledge is considered truant. Repeated offenses will be reported to the Webster Central School District Attendance Office for further action.

STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY:

MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

School nurses and health aides are prohibited by State Law from administering medication to school children without specific written authorization from parents and the family doctor. This applies to prescription drugs and over-the-counter items such as aspirin, eye drops, etc. If parents expect a medication to be administered to a child during the hours he/she is in school, the following requirements must be met in each specific case of treatment:

1. A written authorization from the student's physician indicating frequency and dosage of medication.
2. A written authorization from the student's parent/guardian to administer the medication.
3. Medication must be brought to the school by a parent in the original container. **Medication in plastic bags or in expired containers are not acceptable.**

Authorization as described does not carry over from one year to the next. It must be updated at the start of each school year.

Medications which are sent to school without the proper authorization will not be given to the student and will be returned to the parent.

NOTE: It is often easier for you to adjust the timing of a medication when a prescription is to be given for a short time.

POTASSIUM IODIDE ADMINISTRATION

New York State has recently amended its emergency plans for those residing (or attending school) within the 10-mile radius of a power plant to include distribution of potassium iodide (KI) during a radiological emergency. KI is an over-the-counter drug that protects the thyroid from exposure to radioactive iodine. School communities like Webster, which includes St. Rita School (within 10 miles of a nuclear power plant) have the recommended dosage of KI available for distribution to students. **If you do not want St. Rita**

School to provide your child with KI, you must sign the Opt-out form sent to families in September and return it to school.

PESTICIDE NEIGHBOR NOTIFICATION LAW SECTION 409-H:

In adherence to New York State Section 409-H Education Law, St. Rita School does not use any pesticide products in its school or on its grounds.

ILLNESS

The guidelines keeping students home from school are:

1. Fever -100 degrees or above. Please note – a student must be fever free for 24 hours without medication before that student can return to school.
2. Vomiting
3. Any rash of unknown cause or knowledge of treatment
4. Red, itching, draining eyes -- unless student has known allergies and is in fact under treatment
5. A student who does not appear well or who in fact, is not well should not return from illness. A general "rule of thumb" is 24 hours before returning from any illness.
 - a. Chicken Pox -- all blisters must have scabs, no fever -- usually not less than 5 days
 - b. Strep Throat – If a rapid strep test is negative, a student may return to school. If a rapid strep test is positive, or if a traditional throat culture is done, a student may not return to school until a negative result is obtained or the child has been on antibiotics for 48 hours.
 - c. Other contagious diseases at the direction of the doctor
6. Any obviously ill student -- coughing, sneezing, listless, unable to work in the classroom, distracting to self and others -- even if he/she has no elevated temperature, should be kept at home.
7. If your child is out five (5) consecutive days, a Doctor's note is required to return to school.
8. Any student found with lice by the nurse
 - a. All siblings in school and classmates will have heads checked by school nurse/health aide.
 - b. Student must be nit free before returning to school.

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Diocese of Rochester follows New York State Public Health Law Section 2164. As part of the registration packet, families are provided with specific immunization requirements and may also be provided at any time upon request. Prior to admittance, necessary immunization and health records must be submitted.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education is an integral part of the instructional program at St. Rita School and required of all students. Parents may excuse child(ren) with a written note for no more than two consecutive classes. A written excuse from the doctor is required for any period of time beyond two classes. Also, a doctor's note is required to resume physical education.

Children who are excused from Physical Education class may not take part in lunch time recess outside.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

A New York State certified speech and language teacher is assigned to our school on a shared time basis. He/She conducts screenings and evaluations of pupils to detect specific speech, language, and hearing problems and provides therapy to individuals and small groups of pupils. Services may be given at Dewitt Road School. The speech and language teacher also consults with staff and parents to assist them in meeting

the total needs of the children. The school staff or parents may initiate referrals to the speech and language teacher. Parental permission is always obtained.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

St. Rita School has the services of a School Psychologist who acts as a consultant to teachers and parents regarding such matters as learning problems and school adjustment. Parents wishing consultation with the School Psychologist should contact the Principal.

SCOLIOSIS SCREENING

New York Education Law requires that all children between 8 and 16 years of age receive a school screening examination to find children with possible curvature of the spine (scoliosis).

A school nurse/health aide/doctor will check children showing any questionable findings and designate those needing referral to their own physician. This referral does not indicate a definite diagnosis of scoliosis but indicates the need for a more in depth evaluation.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

If it becomes necessary to close school due to inclement weather, such notice will be given over the local TV and radio stations beginning at 6:00 a.m. The announcement will indicate that **ALL WEBSTER CENTRAL SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED**. Families are requested to listen to the radio and not call the School Office.

Students who attend St. Rita School from districts other than Webster will not be transported if their home district is closed due to inclement weather.

St. Rita School will also use the MSP (My Student Progress) emergency communication system to alert parents through phone numbers and text.

School sponsored activities are automatically cancelled when school is closed (i.e., choir, language class, Odyssey of the Mind).

For Scouting and CYO activities (soccer, basketball, cheerleading), contact the leader or coach.

FAMILY VACATIONS

The school is unable to authorize vacations while classes are in session. We urge parents to avoid taking a child out of school for this purpose. Absence from school for vacation purposes is an **illegal** absence.

Teachers will not prepare work for the child to take on vacation. Instruction in the classroom is so much more than assignments that we do not feel that this is an effective method of instruction. We prefer that students make-up pertinent assignments upon return to school where the teacher can supervise the instruction.

Please do not schedule vacations during NYS testing weeks, usually in the Spring. For information about NYS testing dates, please call the Office at 585-671-3132.

SCHOOL VISITS:

VISITOR POLICY

All visitors, including parents, **must** report to the School Office upon arrival at school. No one should go directly to any classroom or the Nurse's Office. For SECURITY REASONS we need to know who is in the building. For *smooth operating* reasons we need to minimize interruptions in classrooms. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Parents may observe in a classroom by appointment only. Student guests cannot be accommodated without at least two days notification and the approval of the administration.

Parents are very welcome to attend any event which occurs at school. Your participation and interest are important and appreciated.

LUNCH

Supervision of the children during the lunch hour is the responsibility of staff lunch monitors.

LUNCH HOURS:

11:30 a.m. - 11:50 p.m.	Outdoor recess	Grades K, 1, 5
11:50 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	Lunch in classrooms	Grades K - 5
12:25 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.	Outdoor recess	Grades 2, 3, 4

Children go outside to play each day (except if it is raining or it is extremely cold). They need this time for exercise and get fresh air. Coats, sweaters, and/or jackets, are to be worn if the temperature is 60 degrees or below. We ask that you make sure your children are prepared to go outside to play in cold weather, with boots, hat, mittens, slacks (snow pants when necessary) and warm jackets.

The children may purchase milk and special lunches by the semester. Order forms/links to online ordering will be available on the school's website (<http://stritawebster.org/school>) at the appropriate time.

TRANSPORTATION

We ask that you notify the school of any special circumstances regarding transportation of your child. This includes any changes in pick-up or drop-off points, whether temporary or permanent. Comings and Goings forms will be available for download on the school's website (<http://stritawebster.org/school>) the last week in August. They must be returned to the school before the first day of classes.

1. For a one-day occurrence, a note from you will enable us to issue a Bus Pass to the proper destination.
2. For a temporary change, send a written notice of the change to your local transportation office, and a copy to the School Office.
3. If the change is permanent -- your address changes and/or the before and after care arrangements change -- please notify the local transportation office and request a new Comings and Goings form from the school at least one week in advance of the change.
4. On the Emergency Card sent home the first day of school, we ask that you give instructions for emergency early dismissal. If these instructions change, please notify us immediately.
5. Busing questions can only be answered by the transportation office in your local school district. Any questions or concerns should be directed to them.
6. Without a signed note from you, your child will follow dismissal procedures as instructed on the Comings and Goings form.

7. If somebody other than a parent is picking up your child and the School Office is not familiar with this person, they will be asked to show identification.

TUITION

Tuition is announced each year by the St. Rita Parish Finance Committee. If the tuition rate is not announced at the time of registration, the registration fee is refundable until tuition is announced.

At the time of registration, you may choose to pay annually, semi-annually or monthly. Tuition is paid through FACTS, a tuition processing company. For more detailed information regarding tuition, please go to our website: stritawebster.org/school or contact our Finance Director, Joan Sullivan.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Families that are one payment in financial delinquency will be notified by FACTS as being past due. The Pastor/Pastoral Administrator, Finance Director and Principal will be notified of the past due status.

Families with balances greater than 60 days past due will not be permitted to return to school until the outstanding balance is resolved.

St. Rita School will pursue every avenue to obtain tuition and After Care payment, including collection agencies and legal options. Academic records and transcripts will not be released until the outstanding balance is paid in full, as well as any collection fees incurred.

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

It is a proven fact that uniforms: effect behavior in a positive way, eliminate competition, save money, instill pride (if worn properly), and give one a sense of belonging.

All students in Grades K-5 at St. Rita School are to be dressed in the proper uniform each day of the school year. Complete uniform is to be worn to and from school unless specific permission is granted otherwise. Parents will be notified of any violation of the uniform code.

No jewelry (this includes plastic chokers, chains, and ankle or wrist bracelets). Necklaces are NOT allowed for safety reason (PE & Recess – playground) except for religious necklaces (crosses or medals) on a small, short chain that are worn UNDER the child's blouse or shirt. Only stud earrings are acceptable for girls. Other earrings are dangerous at lunch time and in PE class. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings in school or at school functions.

No unusual hair styles (including mohawks, hair carvings, bleached, colored, tinted, highlighted, etc.) are to be worn. These can all be distracting to the learning process. Only navy, white, or school plaid headbands and small bows are allowed. Hair for boys and girls should not be in their eyes or over their faces. Boys hair should be **above** the collar.

Clothing must “fit appropriately”! Not too tight, not too loose, and/or not too short!

GIRLS - GRADES K - 5

- Regulation plaid jumper.
- Navy blue uniform dress pants or skort purchased from Stitchworks.

- Navy blue dress shorts from Stitchworks. (Shorts may only be worn during September, October, May, and June.) Shorts purchased in September that are too small or short in May should not be worn.
- Plain white or blue tailored blouse with embroidered Peter Pan collar (long or short sleeved) to be worn only with jumper.
- White embroidered polo shirt, long or short-sleeved, may be worn tucked in with uniform shorts, skorts, or pants, NOT with jumper.
- Jumpers, shorts and skorts should reach the length of student’s fingertip when considering length.
- White embroidered turtleneck (appropriate in winter), may be worn with jumper, skort, pants, or shorts.
- Navy or white knee socks, tights, or “crew” type socks. (*no golf socks*). Socks must be above the ankles.
- Plain navy blue embroidered sweater (pullover or cardigan) purchased from or Stitchworks.
- NO makeup is to be worn. Subtle-colored solid nail polish – no decals/designs is acceptable.

BOYS - GRADE K - 5

- Regulation light blue embroidered polo shirt – purchased from Stitchworks. Shirts may be long or short-sleeved and must be tucked neatly in pants.
- White embroidered turtleneck is appropriate in winter.
- Plain navy blue or black dress pants (no cargo pants, elastic at ankle or baggy pants).
- Navy blue dress shorts purchased from Stitchworks. (Shorts may only be worn in September, October, May and June.) Shorts are worn with a light blue embroidered polo shirt tucked in.
- Plain navy blue embroidered sweater (pullover or cardigan) or blue embroidered sweater vest.
- Black, navy, or SOLID white socks (*no golf/tennis socks/athletic/sports socks are allowed*). Socks must be above the ankle.

Embroidered and screen-printed items are now mandatory.

Embroidered items:

- Girls: Peter Pan collared blouses, white turtlenecks, polo shirts, sweaters
- Boys: Blue polo shirts, white turtlenecks, sweaters, sweater vests

BELTS

- A belt needs to be worn with pants and shorts, as shirts are required to be tucked in. A uniform plaid, solid black, blue, or brown belt is acceptable.

SHOES

- A dark, rubber-soled (non-marking), flat heeled solid dress shoe (tie or loafer style) is to be worn with the dress uniform including the dress shorts and skort. No clogs, crocs, or open-backed shoes) are allowed. No shoes with buckles will be allowed as they may scratch the desks and floors.
- A plain LOW TOP solid black or solid white sneaker, with solid white or black colored soles. (To be worn only on PE days). Sneakers may have only black or white shoelaces.
- Shoes and sneakers that make no marks protect our gymnasium floor and school hallway.
*Shoes and sneakers that follow the code have been found at Kohl’s, Payless, Famous Footwear, JC Penney, Sears, Wal-Mart and Target.

PE UNIFORM

This uniform is the school uniform on your child's PE days.

- Gray embroidered sweatshirt (winter), gold screen-printed T shirt. Only a St. Rita logo is permitted on PE uniforms. CYO/ST. RITA TIGER shirts/jerseys are worn for sports events, not PE class.
- Solid black embroidered nylon PE pants (winter) or long, loose-fitting, screen-printed mesh black shorts (September, October, May, and June). Please remember shorts should be at student's fingertip length.
- A plain LOW TOP solid black or solid white sneaker, with solid white or black colored soles. (To be worn only on PE days). Sneakers may have only black or white shoelaces.
- St. Rita sweatshirts may be worn *only* on PE days (not with dress uniform).

PE uniforms **MUST** be purchased at Stitchworks, or Recognition Experts (online at <http://www.recognitionexperts.com/> Click on 'Teams, Schools, Corporate' link at the top).

Embroidered and screen-printed items are now mandatory.

Embroidered PE items:

Girls: PE sweatshirts and nylon PE pants.

Boys: PE sweatshirts and nylon PE pants.

Screen-Printed Items:

Girls and Boys: PE T-shirt and long, loose-fitting, black mesh shorts

Please label ALL clothes with child's name.

NON-UNIFORM DAYS

Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for school -- clean, neat clothes. **Shorts can only be worn on Non-Uniform Days in September, October, May, and June.** Please remember shorts must be at student's fingertip length.

Students are NOT to wear shirts with offensive writing or pictures.

COLD WEATHER

Students need to be dressed for the weather. (Once the cold weather sets in, winter coats, snow pants, hats, mittens/gloves, boots, and extra socks, etc. are needed, especially when children are outside at lunch recess.) **Please label ALL clothes with child's name.**

BEFORE SCHOOL & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Before & After School Care is offered for those who have registered and paid the registration fee. The Before Care Program is located in the PK4 classroom in the main building, and the After Care Program is located in the Barn adjacent to the school. Applications for Before/After Care can be found on our school website at: <http://stritawebster.org/school>.

After Care Hours: Pre Kindergarten: 2:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. K-5: 2:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Before School Care Hours: Pre-Kindergarten: 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. K-5: 7:00 a.m. – 7:50 a.m.

Before School Care can be used on a regular or on an “As Needed” basis; however, advance notice and approval is required. Please call the School Office to discuss.

The Administration has the right to define and clarify policy throughout the school year.