

# SAINT RITA SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK 2016-2017

*“...The Place to be where the Love of Christ Is Lived and Shared”*

## Mission Statement

St. Rita School is a Catholic parish elementary school that provides the opportunity for students to achieve academic excellence in a nurturing, faith-filled environment. We prepare our students to be responsible Christian citizens who can make sound, moral choices and think critically to meet the challenges of today's rapidly changing society and those they will face in the future.



1601 Whitney Ave. Hamden, CT 06517

*St. Rita School is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and by the State of Connecticut Board of Education*



# Catholic Schools Education for a Life time

## Purpose and Vision For Catholic School Education

Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Hartford welcome students of all faiths, ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

The fundamental purpose of Catholic schools is to:

- Provide a safe, nurturing and secure environment in which students encounter the living God, who in Jesus Christ, reveals His transforming love and truth;
- Partner with parents to support students in their learning and in their search for knowledge, meaning, and truth;
- Create a Catholic climate that contributes to the formation of students as active participants in the parish community;
- Foster a culture of educational excellence through critical thinking skills, innovative and rigorous curriculum standards, a global perspective, and an emphasis on moral education, community, and service;
- Promote life-long learning that advances the development of the whole person-mind, body, and soul; and
- Graduate students prepared to become productive, virtuous citizens and church leaders who will fashion a more humane and just world.



# HANDBOOK SAINT RITA SCHOOL

***\*When applicable the policies of the Archdiocese are noted as (ADH: \_\_\_\_\_) in the Family Handbook.***

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Saint Rita School is a community of students, parents, teachers and ministers of the Church. As a community, we strive to nurture Catholic Christian moral principles by providing a caring and positive environment. We believe that it is our responsibility to help students grow spiritually, intellectually, socially, and physically, and to see that students' gifts and talents are recognized and enhanced.

## **PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal** To nurture Catholic principles.

1. To encourage students to develop a personal relationship with Christ
2. To teach the basic elements of our faith every day
3. To encourage our students to respond to the needs of others through service
4. To prepare and celebrate Eucharistic liturgies and other opportunities for prayer highlighting the themes of the liturgical year
5. To encourage students to resolve conflict based on gospel principles
6. To guide students in their preparation for First Eucharist and First Penance and continue to support their reception of the sacraments
7. To provide an annual retreat for 7 & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students

**Goal** To recognize and encourage the growth of each child's talents and gifts.

1. To provide opportunities for students to participate in the performing arts
2. To provide opportunities for students to enhance the community's prayer life through their participation in liturgies
3. To offer students the opportunity to participate in various contests and competitions so that their gifts will be recognized by the greater public
4. To provide opportunities for students to enhance their leadership abilities
5. To encourage students to participate in co-curricular activities.

**Goal** To create and promote opportunities for parents and parishioners to learn about and become actively involved in life after school.

1. To provide information to parents that will enhance and develop a partnership between home and school
2. To provide opportunities for parents and parishioners to take part in various school sponsored activities

**Goal** To provide an academically challenging curriculum.

1. To periodically review and update textbooks
2. To provide computer access
3. To offer a comprehensive Music, Art and Physical Education program

4. To provide opportunities for students to use the library
5. To provide a band program for students in grades 4-8
6. To offer a World Language to students in grades **PreK4** – 8
7. To offer Algebra I or Pre-Algebra to students in grade 8

## **HISTORY**

To learn more about the history of St. Rita School see a brief description on the website ([www.stritaschool.org](http://www.stritaschool.org))

## **ROLE OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN**

It is the responsibility and sacred charge of parents/guardians to provide children with a good Christian education so that they may become citizens of both earth and heaven. This education begins and continues each week with the expectation of family participation in the Eucharistic liturgy.

Because of the complex society in which we live, the success and responsibility of educating a child requires the sharing of ideas from both home and school. We encourage parents/guardians to take an active role in the education of their children through both Home and School Association activities and volunteering time and talent for the advancement and enrichment of the school community. Together we can encourage optimal growth.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

St. Rita School admits qualified students of any race, color, national and /or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities made available at the school. While St. Rita School does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services is not always available to them. (ADH: 5.101)

St. Rita hires qualified individuals of any race, color, national and/or ethnic origin. Those hired receive all the rights and privileges entitled to the employees of the school.

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

Students are admitted to Saint Rita School on an annual basis. The administration of St. Rita School will determine who is qualified for admission and, if necessary, will also assign priorities for admission. An application deadline will be announced well in advance in the St. Rita Parish bulletin and in other local publications.

Prerequisites for admission are:

1. satisfactory performance on the placement test for the appropriate grade which is administered to all new students;
2. a satisfactory record from the previous school.

A family who makes application to St. Rita completes the necessary form and pays a non-refundable application fee. Upon acceptance, a non-refundable registration fee is required which is paid in one installment. Students who meet these requirements will be admitted as openings occur. If space is limited, the following priorities will be assigned to applications received before the deadline. Late applications will be considered only if space is available.

*Priorities for admission to Kindergarten:*

1. A student enrolled in the pre-kindergarten program, a child of a member of St. Rita Parish (as determined by the pastor), or a sibling enrolled in St. Rita School.

2. A child of a member of another Catholic parish (as determined by his or her pastor).
3. Others

*Priorities for admission to all other grades:*

1. A child of a member of St. Rita Parish (as determined by the pastor) or a sibling of a student enrolled in St. Rita School.
2. A child of a member of another Catholic parish (as determined by his or her pastor).
3. Others

*Continuance at St. Rita School for each successive year is based on overall successful achievement of the student and is the decision of the school administration made in the best interests of the individual student.*

## **SPIRITUAL LIFE**

### **PRAYER**

Prayer is vital to the St. Rita School Community. The school community begins and ends the day with prayer; and each class within the school day also begins with prayer. (ADH: 4.109)

### **SCHOOL LITURGIES**

Well planned liturgical experiences in accordance with approved liturgical norms shall form an integral part of the Religion curriculum of each grade throughout the school year. The celebration of the Eucharist will ordinarily take place on the first Friday of each month and on Holy Days of Obligation during the school year. (ADH: 4.112) Each grade level is responsible for planning one Liturgy and all should participate. There are also other occasions for prayer as a community. These occasions usually focus on various liturgical seasons.

### **SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS**

Sacramental celebrations are parish celebrations and, as such, properly belong in the parish where the student and family worship each weekend. Students in Grade 2 prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist through daily classroom instruction. In addition, students are expected to participate in special workshop days and the programs of celebration. Parent meetings in preparation for these sacraments are an important part of this preparation, and all parents are expected to attend. Children who are not members of St. Rita Parish should have the permission of their own pastor to celebrate these sacraments at St. Rita Church. (ADH: 4.113)

Times are also provided throughout the year for communal celebrations of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, either for individual classes or for the families in school through the parish.

## **ACADEMIC LIFE**

### **CURRICULUM**

St. Rita School follows the recommended curriculum guidelines of the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Hartford in all major subject areas (ADH: 4.102). Grades 6-8 have a departmentalized program. A more limited departmental arrangement is in place for Grades 3, 4 and 5 while primary grades are more self-contained.

### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

Participation in any extracurricular activity at St. Rita School is a privilege, and students participating in the activity must be aware that they are representing St. Rita School. In order to be

eligible for any extracurricular activity, a student must maintain an average grade of C- (70) or above in all subjects. A student who does not maintain this average or a student who does not represent him/herself in an acceptable manner may be suspended from participating in extracurricular activities or be placed on probation. The time of suspension/probation will be set by the administration.

Extracurricular activities that have by-laws (including student council and National Junior Honor Society) may have their own minimum academic requirements for participation or membership.

Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. School play
2. Sports teams: Soccer, Baseball, Softball, Basketball, Cheerleading
3. Student Council
4. Yearbook

Parents/Guardians will be informed of suspension from extracurricular activities via letter from the principal. Written notification will also be given to the moderators/coaches of the extracurricular activities. Students on suspension may not participate in meetings, club/team sponsored activities, practices, and games.

Students who are suspended from participating in extracurricular activities will be allowed to TRY OUT for an activity. Acceptance into an activity does not automatically indicate full participation in that activity.

**COMPUTER/INTERNET POLICY** (*reference the Acceptable Use Policy at the end of this Handbook*)

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

The expectation is that all eighth grade students will master their course of study. If an eighth grade student fails one or more subjects, a plan to guarantee mastery will be created and a diploma will be awarded only after the plan is successfully completed.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework shall be designed to serve a positive purpose, shall be assigned on a regular basis, and shall be closely integrated with class work \* **(ADH 4.105)**.

Homework **supports** independent learning and is closely integrated with class work. Homework is usually not more than thirty minutes for Grades 1-3 and usually not more than one hour for Grades 4 and 5. Students in Grades 6-8 are encouraged to take responsibility for their studies by completing daily assignments as well as anticipating long-range assignments.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to support their child(ren) by providing adequate time for them to complete their homework assignments as well as to provide a suitable place for them to complete their homework. It is important, however that each student complete his/her own homework independently since it is often used to assess the student's mastery of the material.

## **HONOR ROLL FOR GRADES 6-8**

To recognize academic achievement, an honor roll program is established based on the following criteria:

<b>High Honors:</b>	<b>All A's</b>
<b>Honors:</b>	<b>A's &amp; B's</b>
<b>Merit:</b>	<b>A's, B's and one C</b>

“Schools implementing an honor roll system must include the following subjects when determining honors status: religion, language arts, literature, history/social studies, math science/health, \*world language.

\*If taught fewer than three times a week, it need not be considered when determining honor status. (At St. Rita School Art, Music, Physical Ed, Geography will not be averaged in determining Honors status).

Any grade lower than a B- in a major academic area or lower than an S in a ‘special’ shall negate honor roll status. In the event that a student receives one C in an academic area, but A’s and B’s in all other academic areas, the status of honorable mention may be awarded. Behavior must be a consideration in determining honor roll status.” (ADH 4.134)

St. Rita School will abide by the above as noted in the Archdiocesan Handbook. If a student does receive one C in an academic area and A’s and B’s in all other academic areas, the status of Merit will be awarded.

### **LIBRARY**

Students have the privilege of borrowing books from the school library. Once in the possession of the student, it is the responsibility of the student to care for the book and to return it to the library in good condition. If books are lost or damaged, the student will be assessed for the book’s replacement cost.

### **NEWSLETTER**

News and Notes is published weekly and is sent via email. Other pertinent information will be sent home in the Tuesday envelope with the oldest or only child. The weekly envelope is to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school. A Calendar of Events and News and Notes may also be found on the school website @ ([www.stritaschool.org](http://www.stritaschool.org)).

### **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is not acceptable. It is the taking of another's work, ideas or creative ability without proper permission. Stealing another's work includes student to student plagiarism. Copying of student work is also not acceptable. If a student's work is found to hold plagiarized information s/he will receive a "0" for the given assignment. The student will redo the assignment and may earn up to 50% on the assignment. If a student plagiarizes his/her parents will be contacted by the teacher. Repeated incidents of plagiarism may result in more serious consequences.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Parents/Guardians of students in grades 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> may view their child’s grades and achievement at any time during the school year. Progress reports will **be distributed mid-trimester to those whose grades are below 70%**.

Teachers also contact parents/guardians regarding their child’s progress more informally throughout the school year. Parents/Guardians may also request conferences with their child's teacher(s).

Parent/Guardian-Teacher conferences are held during the first **and second trimester** of the school year.



## PROMOTION/RETENTION

Students are promoted once a year based on the student's satisfactory completion of the grade requirements (ADH: 5.302). This promotion indicates that they have mastered the curriculum for the given course of study. The failure to pass two or more subjects indicates that the student has not successfully completed the course of study. In this case, the student may be retained in his/her current grade level so that the curriculum can be mastered.

Teachers will be in frequent communication with parents/guardians regarding specific challenges to the student's learning. Parents/guardians will be notified about the recommendation to retain a student **by the end of the second trimester**. The administration reserves the right to make the final decision regarding a student's retention or promotion.

In some cases promotion will be given on the condition that a student attends summer school or engages a tutor and successfully masters a given curriculum area. Prior approval of either the summer school or tutor must be approved by the administration.

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards are distributed **three** times during the school year for grades K-8, **three** times for kindergarten, and **twice** for Pre-K. The grading scale and frequency of distribution are established by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Hartford (ADH: 4.134).

The following grading scales are now in use:

### Grades 1-3

**5= Consistently exceeds grade level expectations for this term.**

**4= Consistently achieved developmentally appropriate skills and/or expectations for this term.**

**3=Approaching mastery of developmentally appropriate skills and/or expectations for this term.**

**2= Approaching proficiency toward developmentally appropriate skills and/or expectations for this term.**

**1-Difficulty meeting developmentally appropriate skills and/or expectations for this term.**

**I-Incomplete work for this term**

\*O= Outstanding

\*S= Satisfactory

\*U= Unsatisfactory

\* For use in subject areas that meet less than three times a week.

### Grades 4-8

A+	100- 98
A	97- 94
A-	93- 90
B+	89- 87
B	86- 83
B-	82- 80
C+	79- 77
C	76- 73
C-	72- 70
D	69- 65
F	Below 65, failing

For classes that meet once a week, an S for Satisfactory work or a U for Unsatisfactory work is given. There is not a specific grade given in **Library** or in Health. Work done for these classes is incorporated into other class subjects.

### **SCHOOL RECORD**

The official cumulative record of the Archdiocese of Hartford will be used at St. Rita School and kept on file in the school office. A duplicate record will be mailed to any school to which a student is transferred or promoted once a release form has been signed by the parent/guardian. All material in the student's file shall be treated as confidential and shall be accessible only to the Principal, members of the professional staff, and the parents/guardians. (ADH: 5.404). Release to any others will require written permission of the parent/guardian or a court subpoena. If a parent/guardian wishes to review his/her child(ren)'s cumulative file a request for review needs to be in writing to the school office at least 24 hours prior to the review.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

St. Rita School follows the standardized testing program established each year by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Hartford (ADH 4.135). Ordinarily the Iowa Test of Basic Skills is administered to Grades 3-7 in the spring. Grades **2, 5** and **7** also take the Cognitive Abilities Test (Cog At). Normally it takes 4-6 weeks for the test results to be sent to the school. Parents are mailed the test results of their children. If parents/guardians wish to discuss their child's test scores they are encouraged to contact their child's teacher. **Student in grades 5 & 8 are also administered the ACRE (Assessment of Catechisis/Religious Education) in March of each school year.**

## **DAILY LIFE**

### **ABSENCE**

Excessive absence (40) or the equivalent of 40 days including tardies can be cause for a student to be retained. Students are to bring a written excuse explaining each absence. The note must be dated, and signed by the parent/guardian. Please indicate the day(s) of the absence. An absence of one half day causes a student to lose perfect attendance. Students **ARRIVING AFTER 11:25 a.m.** or **LEAVING BEFORE 11:25 a.m.** will be considered ABSENT for one half day.

Any student who is absent from school may not participate in any extracurricular activities on that particular day.

Students must make arrangements with their teacher(s) regarding the completion of assignments. In grades 5-8, it is the responsibility of the student to communicate with each of his/her teachers upon his/her return to school.

Parents/Guardians may request work from teachers if a child is out of school due to illness. Teachers must be given time to prepare the child's work. If a parent/guardian will be picking up work for his/her child then it is necessary to check in at the office.

### **ASBESTOS**

At the beginning of each school year in compliance with AHERA regulations, we are required to inform all those associated with St. Rita School of the Asbestos Inspection Report and Management Plan. A copy of the plan is available in the school office.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend school for 180 days according to Connecticut School Attendance Law and as reflected in the school calendar of the Archdiocese of Hartford.

Parent/Guardians **must** call the office (248-3114) by 9:00 a.m. to report a child's/children's absence. This call assures the school that students are safe. The school office will contact parents/guardians who do not report absences.

#### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

St. Rita School has both a before school and after school program on site.

#### **BEFORE SCHOOL**

The Before School Program begins at 7:00 A.M. (This includes days with a **delay** due to inclement weather). Children will enter school using the gym doors. **A fee of \$4.00 is paid using the PayPal account set up on-line using the before and aftercare portal.** This fee will be charged to any student who arrives prior to 8:00 AM. **The fee for delayed opening days will be \$15.00 as care is provided from 7:00 A.M. -10:30 A.M..**

#### **AFTER SCHOOL**

Supervision in the After School program is provided from dismissal until, but no later than, 5:30 p.m. When families are late in picking up their child(ren) a late fee of \$10.00 per 15-minute period after 5:30 p.m. will be charged. Parents/Guardians are **to register and pay for Before and Aftercare on-line by creating an account.** A parent/guardian must sign their child(ren) out when picking them up at the end of the day. **The fee for the program is \$15 per day per child in grades K-8 and \$18 for a PreK student or \$35 per day for a family of 3 or more children. The After School Program is also available during half-days unless designated otherwise in the weekly Notes and Notes. The cost for half-days is \$30 per child K-8 and \$36 for PreK students or \$70 per family of 3 or more children. There is NO After School program on half-days prior to holidays. There is no aftercare on early dismissal days due to inclement weather.**

***ALL POLICIES FOUND IN THIS HANDBOOK APPLY TO THE BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM.***

#### **BICYCLES**

Students in Grades 5 – 8 are permitted to ride bicycles to school. They must walk their bicycles on school property, wear a helmet, and park and lock the bicycle in the designated bike rack. Anyone not following these rules will lose their bike riding privileges. St. Rita School is not responsible for damage to bikes on school property.

#### **BUSING**

Free transportation is provided for all students who live in Hamden more than one mile from the school. Bus regulations are compiled by the Town of Hamden and the Hamden Board of Education. The following rules apply to those students attending St. Rita School and riding on school buses furnished by the town:

1. The driver shall be in charge of the bus and report any misbehavior to the principal.
2. Students must not leave their seats until the bus has stopped. On entering or leaving the bus, no student shall injure or disturb other students.
3. No eating or drinking is allowed on the school bus at any time. The use of electronic devices is not allowed on a school bus. The transport of such items on a school bus may be *allowed only if the student has been requested in writing by a teacher or school administrator to do so.*

4. Only persons authorized by the Central Office will be allowed to ride any school bus.
5. Students are not allowed to ride on any school bus other than the one assigned unless they have received permission from the St. Rita School Office/Hamden Central Office and are residents of Hamden. Parents must contact the St. Rita School Office in a timely way to seek permission.
6. Those things which are not appropriate on school property are not appropriate on a school bus.
7. The privilege of riding the bus may be denied any student for inappropriate behavior. Such behavior is intolerable since it directly compromises the physical safety of our children.
9. Bus Incident Report
  - a. a **first** Bus Incident Report will result in the student's receiving a demerit and a warning of suspension from riding the bus;
  - b. a **second** Bus Incident Report will result in suspension from riding the bus for a period of time;
  - c. a **third** Bus Incident Report will result in suspension from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year.
10. Any change in a child's normal transportation routine must be requested in writing by the parent/guardian and approved by the school administration.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

In keeping with the church's principle of subsidiarity, problems should be resolved by seeking resolution with those who are involved with the conflict. Thus, if a difficulty arises between parent/guardian and teacher, the resolution must begin with these two parties. If the difficulty is not resolved, then the parent/guardian may contact the administrator to seek resolution. If matters remain unresolved, then the parent/guardian may contact the pastor to seek resolution.

To contact a teacher or administrator, the parent may; send in a written note to the teacher/administrator; call the office to speak with a teacher/ administrator; leave a voice mail for the teacher/administrator or email the teacher's school email address. Parents should refrain from calling teachers/administrators at home.

#### **CRISIS PLAN/SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

An established crisis plan that contains building wide safety guidelines in all areas is reviewed and updated each year. State Law requires that all schools conduct a monthly fire drill. Lock down drills will also be conducted.

#### **CELL PHONES, ELECTRONICS DEVICES AND OTHER PERSONAL POSSESSIONS**

Users must adhere to local school policy regarding the use of electronic devices (ADH: 5.509.) Students are not permitted to use cell phones at any time in the school building during school hours. (This includes before and after school care). Cell phones will be confiscated if seen or heard. Cell phones or other technological devices will be handed-in to the middle school teachers at the beginning of the school day and will be secured in a locked cabinet/closet and returned to the students at the end of the day. Handheld game consoles, mp3 players, Ipods, other music devices, trading cards, toys, etc. and any item that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time. For safety reasons, key chains and toys may not be attached to student backpacks. Items in violation will be confiscated and must be claimed by a parent/guardian in the office. The school administration will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school.

Consistent disregard for this policy can result in losing the privilege of bringing a phone to school.

All communication to or from students must go through the school office during the school day as well as during the Before or After School Program.

The school is not responsible for the loss of any clothing or other personal possessions. There is a lost-and-found container on the first floor where items may be retrieved.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

School sponsored field trips are a privilege, not a right. They are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals. Transportation for field trips is arranged via private carriers. According to Archdiocesan Policy\*(ADH 4.125), overnight field trips are not allowed. Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct. A written official permission slip, signed by the parent/guardian, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. A completed permission slip received by fax is acceptable with parent/guardian signature. Verbal permission cannot be accepted. Students participating in the field trip must ride the bus to and from the field trip with their class. Cell phones may not be carried on field trips without the permission of the teacher. Parents/Guardians who accompany a class on a field trip will be given Chaperone Guidelines to follow while on the field trip. All chaperones are responsible for following these guidelines.

### **HEALTH POLICIES**

St. Rita School is served by personnel assigned by the Hamden Schools Health Service. If your child is ill, you must call the school office before 9:00 a.m. to report it so that the nurse is made aware of any illness that may be communicable. We ask that parents give immediate attention to any notice sent home by the school nurse.

A physical examination by a doctor and immunizations are required for students entering Kindergarten, Grade 7, or those students from out of state who will be attending St. Rita's.

Each student's health records will be maintained in the health office in accordance with state and local regulations. When a student graduates or transfers to another school, the records will be sent to the receiving school once a release of records form is received.

Connecticut State Law requires a written order from a licensed physician and written authorization from a parent/guardian for the school nurse or, in the absence of the nurse, the administrator or teacher, to administer any medication, both prescription and non-prescription.

No medications (including over the counter medications) will be given to any student without a written order from a physician. No student may carry on their person a prescription or non-prescription drug without the explicit permission of the School Nurse.

With respect to food, students are not allowed to share food at any time in school.

All teachers and administrators are bound by law to inform the Department of Children and Families if abuse of any kind is suspected.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost articles are placed in the lost and found bin found near the nurse's office. Parents/Guardians are asked to clearly mark their child(ren)'s possessions. After a period of time, if articles are not claimed, they will be brought to a charitable organization.

## **LUNCH**

Students have the option of bringing their lunch from home or purchasing hot lunch on a monthly basis. All lunch orders will be placed on-line using Hotlunches.net and payment will be made via Paypal. All families must register and create an account to access the hot lunch program. Milk may be purchased on a yearly basis.

Any beverage brought from home must be in unbreakable containers.

To lessen the risk of causing an allergic reaction in students with food allergies, students are asked not to share food with anyone.

For students with food allergies, a specific table is provided for eating lunch. Parents/guardians in grades 3-8 may opt to have their child sit at lunch tables that are not specifically designated for students with food related allergies. A form for this option must be requested.

## **MESSAGES AND DELIVERIES**

All communications and deliveries for students and teachers must be made through the office.

Messages for students and teachers will be delivered at times that do not disrupt classroom activities.

Students are permitted to use the school phone for emergencies only and must have permission from the office. No calls by students will be permitted for forgotten gym clothes, homework or projects.

No party invitations of any kind, in any grade, are to be given out in the classroom. They should be sent to family's homes.

Parents are asked to refrain from bringing in lunches from fast food restaurants for lunch time unless it is an exception for a child with severe food allergies.

## **NOTIFICATION OF EMERGENCY CLOSING (including INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTIFICATIONS)**

Notifications of school closings due to inclement weather prior to the school day's start will be on local radio and TV. (Under normal circumstances if HAMDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED due to inclement weather ST. RITA SCHOOL will be closed unless a phone call/email is sent changing the message). It is suggested to watch WTNH or other local TV or radio stations for information regarding school closings.

If it is necessary to close school due to unforeseen circumstances parents/guardians will be notified using the designated primary email address and primary cell phone numbers indicated by parents on the school portal. It is important that parents/guardians keep these numbers and email addresses current at all times. Parents may update their personal information at anytime by logging on to the Edu-connect parent portal.

### **OPENING EXERCISES**

All students and teachers, grades K-8, will assemble every morning at **8:15** in the schoolyard for the Pledge of Allegiance, Morning Prayer and announcements. In case of bad weather, this will take place in the gym.

## **PARKING**

**MORNING:** A morning drop-off area has been designated with a one-way entrance from Gillies Road and an exit onto Edgemere Road. A crossing guard is provided at the top of Gillies Road for the safety of the students. **ALL ARE TO CROSS INTO THE SCHOOL GROUNDS WITH THE CROSSING GUARD.**

**DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:** Family cars are not permitted beyond designated areas in the school lot from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. unless special permission has been granted from the principal because of a student's incapacity.

DISMISSAL: At dismissal, family cars should be parked in the space provided in the church lot on the west side of Whitney Avenue. Parents/guardians should then walk to the schoolyard to meet their children. A chain is drawn across the entrance to the school lot on Gillies Road to prevent cars from entering the lot while dismissal is in progress. A crossing guard is at the corner of Whitney Avenue and Gillies Road to assist in crossing the students.

Encouraging your child/children to cross between cars or away from the crossing guard is encouraging him/them to be careless and to disregard authority.

***Please note: Do not park in areas designated as No Parking Zones. Police will enforce this directive.***

#### **PETS**

For reasons of safety, no pets are allowed on the school grounds unless authorized by the administration.

#### **PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE**

**Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must sign off on the last page of the handbook if they do not want their child/ren to be photographed and/or have their pictures posted in school publications.** Photos may involve a particular school activity for the use on the website or other publications.

#### **RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL**

No student shall be released from school or leave the school grounds without the approval of the principal. A request for early dismissal must be in writing, and the student must be signed out in the main office. The person picking up the student is to wait in the office area. Early dismissal for extracurricular activities outside of school sponsored activities is discouraged. Exceptions can be made with permission.

**Students will not be released into the custody of anyone other than a parent without a written authorization from the parent(s).**

In the case of divorce, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide documentation if the non-custodial parent is to be denied access to his/her child.

Every effort should be made to arrange dental and medical appointments outside of school time.

In the case of an emergency, parents or guardians will be notified. For this reason, emergency addresses and phone numbers of persons to contact must be on file in the school office and with the nurse.

#### **SCHOOL ATTIRE**

Boys and girls wear uniforms from the first day of school to the last day.

#### **UNIFORM POLICIES**

**All uniforms must be purchased at the Dennis Uniform Store.**

Pre-K Uniform-Girls and Boys must wear the gym uniform. As an option, the girls may wear the green jersey jumper or the uniform khaki shorts or pants with the green knit uniform shirt with the St. Rita logo. Boys may also wear the uniform khaki shorts or pants with the green knit uniform shirt. Sneakers and socks are to be worn.

Girls Grades K-5:

- Green plaid jumper
- White turtleneck or white peter-pan collar long or short-sleeve shirt
- Green cardigan sweater (OPTIONAL)
- Navy or green tights or navy, green knee high socks or white crew or quarter socks
- Khaki pants (optional in the winter) worn with belt

Boys Grades K-5:

- Khaki pants with brown belt
- Green turtleneck with St. Rita logo
- Green knit long or short sleeved shirt with St.Rita logo
- Uniform green pullover or cardigan sweater (OPTIONAL)
- Navy, green, or white crew or quarter socks

Boys Grades 6-8:

- Khaki pants with brown belt
- Green knit shirt with St. Rita logo (long or short sleeved)
- Uniform green pullover or cardigan sweater (OPTIONAL)
- Navy, green, or white crew or quarter socks

Girls Grades 6-8

- Uniform skort
- Uniform shirt with band bottom
- Uniform green pullover or cardigan sweater (OPTIONAL)
- Navy or green knee high socks or white crew or quarter socks
- Khaki pants (optional in the winter) worn with belt

St. Rita fleeces are acceptable for all grade levels.

The length for the girls' jumper, skort, and all shorts must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee. Girls and boys wear a black, brown, or maroon penny loafer, tassel loafer, or oxford style shoe. Bo Sandals, chunk style, stack or platform shoes are not permitted. Heels may be no more than one inch. All shoes must have backs.

**SUMMER UNIFORM**

K-8 for everyone:

- Khaki shorts
- Green shirt with St. Rita logo
- Crew or quarter white or khaki socks
- Gym sneakers or school shoes
- Brown belt

The summer uniform may be worn during the months of August, September, May, and June.

**GYM UNIFORM**

Gym uniforms with the St. Rita Crusader logo on them are purchased through Dennis Uniforms. Sneakers are to be worn at all times with socks. A Middle School optional warm-up suit is also offered at Dennis Uniforms. This is the only attire allowed for gym. Failure to wear the appropriate gym uniform will keep the student from participating in Physical Education class that day. This may affect the student's grade.



## OTHER PERSONAL ATTIRE AND APPEARANCE

Hair is to be clean and neatly cut. Boy's hair should be above the shirt collar and trimmed around the ears. Hair styles and color should be appropriate for the school environment. Jewelry when worn must be simple and not distracting. Post-type, non-dangling earrings are the only ones permitted, one per ear, worn in the lobe. No choker-style necklaces are permitted. Boys are not to wear any type of earring in school. No other body piercing is allowed. No tattoos are allowed. Make-up is not to be worn in school.

On days when uniforms are not required, students will be given general guidelines for appropriate dress. Generally dress is to be modest at all times and neat in appearance. No inappropriate slogans or logos are permitted. If a student's apparel is deemed inappropriate, a parent/guardian may be called to bring a replacement for the inappropriate apparel. Please note that there should be distinction between a dress up day and a free dress day.

## SCHOOL SCHEDULE

### Pre-Kindergarten:

Half-Day session.....	8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Full Day session.....	8:30 p.m -2:45 p.m

### Kindergarten - Grade 8

Full Day	8:15 a.m.-2:50 p.m.
Early Dismissal Day	8:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

For students not in before or after school care, supervision of students in grades K-8 begins at **8:00 a.m.** and ends at **3:00 p.m.**

**School Office Hours are usually from 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. on a half day before a Holiday: 8-1:00 pm.**

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to insure that the student arrives on time for school. Students in Grades K-8 arriving after that time are considered tardy. Students arriving late must report to the office to receive a late pass which must be presented to the classroom teacher. Appropriate action will be taken for students who receive five or more late passes in the course of a marking period.

## SERVICE LEARNING

Global and community service is encouraged at St. Rita School from the earliest age. Children have opportunities to provide service to the community. Globally, they have reached out to help fund the *Clear Water Initiative* and to participate in *Homes for the Homeless* in Reynosa, Mexico, *Heart 2 Heart...*

## STUDENTS IN THE BUILDING AFTER HOURS

Students are not permitted to return to their classrooms once they have been dismissed nor to come to school on weekends to get forgotten materials. Students in the school for after-school activities will not be permitted to return to their classrooms. Students are given ample time to prepare their books and materials at the end of the day to take home. We encourage students to take home only the books necessary for daily assignments.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

All hard cover textbooks are to be covered and kept covered throughout the school year. Book covers with adhesive backing should not be used. No marks should be made in the books. Any books damaged must be paid for by the student before a new book is issued. Textbooks will also be assessed for damage at the end of the school year and if necessary, payment for damages will be required. (This includes damages to Ipads by those in the 1:1 Ipad program)

## **VACATION TIMES**

Vacations should be planned in accordance with the school calendar which is coordinated as much as possible with the Archdiocese of Hartford and the Town of Hamden. Children who are absent for vacations at times other than those listed on the school calendar will not receive assignments to be done while they are away. A suitable amount of time as determined by the classroom teacher will be given for the completion of work missed. Once the time is completed, work that is unfinished will be graded as a "0". A student will be responsible for any tests taken by the class while he/she is away. Sufficient time will be given to prepare for the test(s).

## **VISITORS TO SCHOOL**

Visitors are welcome in the school. All visitors are required to sign in and sign out in the office. When a parent/guardian wishes to visit a classroom, an appointment must be made through the principal in advance of the visit.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are welcomed to help. All must sign in at the School Office upon arrival. All volunteers must be Virtus trained and have a background check on file.

# **DISCIPLINE**

## **GENERAL BEHAVIOR**

For many reasons, discipline is necessary in all walks of life. Education requires a certain amount of it in order for a student to achieve success in the various areas of learning. In the early years of his/her life, a child should grow to appreciate the value of self-control, perseverance, responsibility, and courtesy. Discipline, therefore, is an essential part of the learning process as well as a result of it. One of the primary goals of a Catholic education is to teach the student how to create a Christian community based on the values of Jesus himself. Each student at St. Rita School must continually grow in self-respect and respect for others. At the same time, the student must develop a special appreciation for those who are in a position of authority and responsible for his/her well-being. Thus, in order to foster good Christian behavior and study habits, appreciation for the environment and concern for the material goods of this earth, and to teach students to allow others the freedom to pursue this goal, rules and regulations are established. These set the direction for future decisions and the consequences which may result.

## **LUNCHROOM BEHAVIOR**

Students in Grades K-8 eat in the lunchroom where they are expected to use good manners and courtesy towards each other, teachers, the adult supervisors, and kitchen personnel. No student(s) will be released from the lunchroom unless the teacher(s) on lunch duty has come to take them outside or to their classrooms for recess or a teacher(s) meets the student(s) to take him/her for a special assignment or project, etc. or a teacher has signed a note asking for students to come to a classroom during lunchtime.

## **SCHOOLYARD BEHAVIOR**

It is expected that all students use good judgment when playing games by avoiding rough behavior. The teacher or other adult on playground duty will be the final decision-maker as to what constitutes harmful or unnecessarily rough behavior in the schoolyard. All students are to respect the teacher or other adult on duty in the morning, at lunchtime, or on bus duty. Any disrespect will result in suspension from the schoolyard for an appropriate length of time. No baseballs or bats, tennis balls or hard balls may be used during recess time in the school yard.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICIES\***

### **BULLYING**

Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools of the Archdiocese (ADH: 5.513). It will not be tolerated during the school day or during any school-sponsored activities on or off the school grounds. Bullying, **harrasment** and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ. This behavior is against the fundamental tenet of, "Love your neighbor as yourself," and destroys respect for the dignity of the student, undermines the Christian atmosphere of the school, and deprives the student of a safe and caring learning environment. Bullying is defined as any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity or through the use of communication devices including the Internet. Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral or written threats, (seriously, in jest, online), teasing, putdowns, name calling, threatening looks, gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation.

### **SCOPE OF POLICY:**

This bullying policy is to be applied to Pre-Kindergarten through Grade Eight at school. Any teacher or staff member who observes or becomes aware of acts of bullying shall report this to a school administrator. Parents may also report suspected acts of bullying to any teacher, who shall report the same to a school administrator, or directly to the school Administrators. The administrator will enter reported incidents from parents, students, or those left anonymously into a "Bullying Logbook." All incidents reported shall be recorded in the bullying logbook and will include the name(s) of the victim(s), the individual(s) committing the bullying act(s), a description of the act(s) committed, and the date(s) of the incident. The "Bullying Logbook" will remain the property of the administration.

Any student who wishes to report an incident or incidents of bullying may do so through a teacher or through a school administrator. Students may also report any incidents of bullying anonymously to a teacher or a school administrator. These anonymous reports should be placed in a sealed envelope addressed to a school administrator and sent to the office in the office envelope. Anonymous reports received by teachers should also be put in a sealed envelope addressed to the principal with the teacher's name on an inner envelope.

Once a suspected bullying incident has been reported, a school administrator shall investigate the circumstances of the incident to determine if bullying has occurred. The school administrator will review the logbook to also see if a pattern is emerging and will use that as a tool of investigation. Investigation of bullying incidents may also include interviews and conversations with students

(including witnesses, the victims(s), and the student(s) doing the bullying), parents, faculty, and staff. Family issues will also be taken into consideration. Parents of the children involved will be made aware of the incidents.

Once the investigation is complete, a school administrator will determine the consequences for the individual(s) on a case by case basis. The consequences may range from community service through suspension and expulsion. The school administrator will, in his/her discretion, consider the nature, frequency and circumstances of the alleged offenses. In addition, the age and grade of the student will be considered. Parents of all children who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents of students against whom such acts are directed, will be notified.

Depending on the severity of the incident, or series of incidents, the administrator may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan, separating and supervising the students involved, providing staff support for students as necessary, reporting incidents to law enforcement if appropriate, and developing a supervision plan with parents.

Please note that harassment/bullying may take several forms:

Student to student

Adult to student

Adult to Adult

Any form of harassment (ADH: 5.511) (verbal, physical, sexual) will not be tolerated. A further discussion of these issues is present in the policies of the Archdiocese of Hartford

### **DETENTIONS AND DEMERITS**

**Detentions** may be given for the following infractions:

1. Excessive tardiness defined as five times or more within a grading period;
2. Incomplete or improper wearing of the school uniform;
3. Chewing gum;
4. Eating outside of the lunchroom during school hours;
5. Coming to class unprepared (no books, homework, pens/pencils, special materials, etc.);
6. Excessive talking during class;
7. Classroom disruption;
8. Improper behavior in bus lines or while boarding buses.

**Demerits** may be given for the following infractions:

1. Disrespect--physical, verbal, or obscene language or gestures to faculty, staff, or peers
2. Cheating; (This includes plagiarism)
3. Fighting;
4. Repeatedly disregarding the uniform policy;
5. Failure to serve a detention;
6. Insubordination;
7. Destruction of property;
8. Dangerous behavior such as pushing, shoving, tripping;
9. Inappropriate behavior in the lunchroom;
10. Inappropriate bus behavior (reception of a bus referral).

The consequences for the above infractions accumulate during the year and are carried from one

marking period to the next.

A detention requires 30 minutes after school on the day designated by the teacher on the detention form. The form must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school the next day in order for the student to remain after school. If the form is not returned, a demerit will be given.

Detentions are to be served as noted on the detention form. If there is a conflict, the parent/guardian is asked to contact the teacher to request rescheduling if possible. A demerit requires 60 minutes after school. The same procedure for serving this time applies to a demerit as applies to a detention.

If a student continues the unacceptable behavior s/he can be suspended from extracurricular activities.

### **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

The following behaviors are serious infractions which could result in suspension or expulsion from the school:

1. The use, sale, distribution, or possession of "controlled substances" such as alcohol, marijuana, or any other illegal substances at school or school-sponsored activities;
2. Smoking at school or at school events;
3. Behavior which is seriously immoral, profane, vulgar, or obscene;
4. Physical violence;
5. Stealing, destruction of school property/the property of others, or vandalism;
6. Serious threat;
7. Bullying or **cyberbullying**
8. Unauthorized absence or leaving the school premises or the classroom without permission;
9. Assault with or possession of a potentially lethal weapon or instrument;
10. Serious insubordination or defiance;
11. Use of the internet to demean, abuse or put into a negative light St. Rita School or any other group, organization or individual.
12. Outrageous or scandalous behavior at school or elsewhere which would reflect adversely on Catholic schools or the Catholic Church.
13. Cheating or plagiarism
14. Sale of any material on school grounds without proper authorization

The above list is not to be considered exhaustive

Suspension (ADH: 5.207) is a temporary removal of a student from his/her regular school program for a specified period of time. Suspension will be considered in cases of serious offense or after lesser disciplinary measures have been ineffective. Grounds for suspension may occur on or off school property, while receiving or awaiting school transportation services, or at any school-sponsored activity. Parents will be notified of the reason for and length of the suspension before it takes place. One suspension will last no longer than five school days. When appropriate, in-school suspension will be imposed in preference to exclusion from school. Students on suspension (in-school or out of school) will be responsible for all work taking place in the classroom each day; this includes daily quizzes, scheduled tests, and projects which may be due during the time of the suspension. It is not the responsibility of the school to provide for the instructional time lost during the time of suspension.

Expulsion is the removal of a student from the school program and the transfer to another school. A student may be expelled from school when he/she: has engaged in conduct which constitutes a serious violation of school policy; is seriously disruptive of the educational process, which endangers persons or property; or has engaged in repeated violations of school policies, rules and standards or

conduct; and when other means of discipline have failed \*(ADH: 5.208). Expulsion will be invoked when the student presents a danger to the moral and/or physical well-being of other students or is guilty of prolonged and open disregard for school authority. Expulsion will be considered only after all other measures have been tried and found to be unsuccessful. However, there may be situations which demand immediate removal of a student from the school. If the serious nature of the problem warrants it, expulsion may be the first punishment invoked against the student. A conference with parents/guardians will be held to discuss the seriousness of the student's misbehavior and the decision for expulsion. Working with the teacher(s) and pastor, the principal will communicate the final decision to the parents/guardians. The Office of Catholic Schools will also be notified as soon as the process begins and before a final decision is made.

*It is to be noted that disciplinary action may be taken in conjunction with any event that is sponsored by the school or for behavior that reflects negatively on the school. This includes sports activities, band, etc. \*Internet activity is also covered in the scope of this policy.*

## **FINANCES**

### **TUITION**

The tuition rates for each school year for grades PK-8 are established by the School Board with the approval of the pastor. The rates are publicized during the second **trimester** of the school year and are effective for the following school year.

### **TUITION COLLECTION**

Tuition payments are collected and managed by the Finance Office of the Parish/School through SMART Tuition Management. Parents are expected to meet the demands of their payment choice through SMART in a timely manner. Any family unable to meet tuition payments must notify the Finance Office immediately. Financial Assistance Applications are available through the school office in the spring of the year. The school will not forward any records for a student with an outstanding Tuition balance. The final report card will not be sent to students with an outstanding Tuition balance at the end of the year. A non-refundable deposit of \$250 per child must be made in order to hold any seat for the child/children. This amount is deducted from the total tuition payment owed to the school. The deposit is paid at the time of re-enrollment, usually during the **second trimester**. Tuition contracts which explain the tuition payment plans are given to each family.

### **PARISH SUBSIDY**

St. Rita Parish subsidizes St. Rita School with an amount approved by the School Board and Parish Finance Council. Families from St. Rita Parish whose children attend St. Rita School are expected to be actively supporting members of the parish. They are expected to contribute to the regular offertory collection of St. Rita Parish. This must be done through the parish envelope system. This support is to the parish and is exclusive of donations made through the parish to other charitable causes (e.g. Mission Collection, Archbishop's Annual Appeal, etc.). Parents are asked to consider the principle of justice, especially as it pertains to the amount each parish student is subsidized by St. Rita Parish. Families who fail to support the parish will be contacted.

Catholic parishes without schools, or with schools that have grades different from those at St. Rita School, are required by Archdiocesan regulations to subsidize St. Rita School for an amount set by the Archdiocese. Parishes have the right to refuse payment of this subsidy if the family does not actively support the parish in which case the family does not have parishioner status.

## **PARENT / GUARDIAN ORGANIZATIONS**

### **ST. RITA SCHOOL BOARD**

St. Rita School Board advises the administration of St. Rita School in matters pertaining to the general well-being of Catholic education. It also assists in the determination of administrative and academic policies for the school.

The Board is composed of 11 members:

1. Pastor
2. Principal
3. Nine members appointed by the pastor and principal in consultation with the board.

### **ST. RITA HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

The Home & School Association is the parent organization of the school. Its members are the parents or guardians of the students of St. Rita School in Grades Pre K-8. The purpose of the Home & School Association is to help parents and teachers acquire a profound appreciation for the ideals of Catholic Education, to promote clearer understanding of the mutual education responsibilities of the parents and teachers, and to help subsidize the school budget through fund-raising efforts. For further information you may check out the website at: [www.stritahsa.org](http://www.stritahsa.org).

### **STUDENT/PARENT DIRECTORY**

The Home & School Association annually prepares a Student/Parent Directory as a means of fostering communication among its members.

### **HOME & SCHOOL ASSESSMENT**

St. Rita Home & School Association establishes an operating budget every year for its fund raising efforts. Included in this budget is an amount established through the operating budget of the school which is a subsidy to the school.

In 1981, the Home & School Association established a policy that each family is expected to support the school's fund raising activities. A family assessment was established with an amount published each year by the School Board.

Any portion of a family's assessment not satisfied through participation in the Home & School Association's major fund raising events becomes the responsibility of that family. The total assessment must be paid in full by April 30th of each school year. If not paid in full by this date then the amount will be added to the following year's tuition payments, a collection agency will be enlisted or records will not be completed if a transfer is requested.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY ST. RITA SCHOOL**

(The following policy covers all electronic devices although the word computer is used throughout.)

### **Introduction**

At St. Rita School, we believe that "... technology must be at the service of the human person ... in conformity with the plan and the will of God ... This is a precious resource when placed at the service of (humankind) and promotes integral development for the benefit of all." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2293, #2294).

At St. Rita School, we believe that the Internet is a tool that needs to be respected and used for the enrichment of learning. With this in mind, it is important that we remember that our schools are founded for Faith development and all tools that we use in the education process

keep this fact in the forefront. At St. Rita School we further believe that the parent, student and school form a partnership, which embraces the ideals of the Catholic faith in word and action. By signing the following policy, the parent and students agree that the student will value the advantage of the Internet and not use it in any manner that violates these values and ideals.

This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviors that all users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using any and all personally-owned devices on the school campus. It applies to privately-owned devices accessing private networks/Internet connections while on school property.

### **Purpose**

We believe that technology is a vital means to assist those who carry out the educational ministry of St. Rita School.

We are pleased to offer students of St. Rita School access to our computer network, including access to the Internet. Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. Even though our system has safeguards, families should be warned that some material accessible through the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people. While our intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources.

**To gain access to the Internet, all students under the age of 18 must obtain parental permission. In addition, parents/guardians and students must BOTH sign and return the Parent/Guardian/Student Agreement and Signature verification form found on the last page of this handbook to the school office by the designated date stated on the form. If this handbook is being read electronically through the school website, this form is also located in a separate PDF file for convenient downloading and printing.**

### **St. Rita School Internet Use Policy**

Students are responsible for good behavior on the school networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communication apply. Students may have e-mail access for curriculum-related activities and communications under their teacher's direct supervision using a classroom account. The network is provided for students mainly to conduct research. Access to network services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access is a privilege and not a right. Access entails responsibility and individual users of St. Rita School's computer network are responsible for their actions. It is presumed that users will comply with school standards and will honor the agreements they



have signed.

Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on any server or computer would be private. During school, teachers will guide them toward appropriate materials. Outside of school, families, bear the same responsibility for such guidance as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, movies, radio, and other potentially offensive media.

Although not an exhaustive list of guidelines, the following are in effect:

- School administrators and faculty may review files and monitor all student computer, local area network, and Internet activity to maintain system integrity and ensure that all users are acting responsibly, the privacy of students' files and electronic messaging is not guaranteed in the school setting. Use of school-issued devices off the school network may also be monitored. Students violating policies governing standards of conduct or the use of technology, including the Internet and electronic mail, will be subject to revocation of privileges and potential disciplinary and/or appropriate legal action.
- Students will not use school computers, networks, electronic mail or access to the Internet to create or transmit text, images, or audio which could be considered as damaging to another's reputation, abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, offensive, threatening, inflammatory, discriminatory, harassing or otherwise illegal or contrary to the school policy. (It is suggested that parents/guardians keep personal computers and other devices that access the internet in common areas in the home. It is also suggested that parents/guardians limit the use of electronic devices. The school cannot take responsibility for what is transmitted and accessed via the internet when students are off the school campus).
- Students will not post any photographs of other students or faculty on the Internet without the written permission of that person or in the case of a minor the parents/guardians of that student. Any student who posts a photo without permission is subject to the school's discipline code.
- Photos posted on the Internet should not have any identifying information attached to the photos; such as but not limited to name, address, phone number, school, grade, uniform, hobbies, and email-addresses.
- Students will not intentionally damage, misuse, or tamper with any hardware, or software, network system, or information belonging to others, nor allow others to do the same. If damage is incurred out of neglect or through intent to damage, the student and his/her family are responsible for repair or replacement.

- Students will not remove technology hardware or software from the school without permission of an administrator.
- Students will not gain unauthorized access to resources or entities or invade the privacy of others, except as otherwise provided in this policy.
- Students will not post anonymous messages or any material authorized or created by another person without his/her consent.
- Cameras, including those on iPads or other devices, may only be used under the direction of the teacher. They are not to be used to take inappropriate photos or videos. Cameras may never be taken into restrooms.
- Students will not use the school network for commercial or private advertising.
- Students will not use the school network in a fashion inconsistent with directions from teachers and other staff and generally accepted network etiquette. Students are not permitted to change any settings on computers or iPads including passwords, desktop, or screen savers.
- No food or drinks may be consumed when working on school equipment.
- Students will not use the Internet for any illegal activity, including but not limited to violation of copyright laws. Students shall not forge messages or web pages.
- Students will not transmit personal information including, but not limited to names, addresses and phone numbers without written permission from the individual or his/her parents or guardians.
- Students will not respond to unsolicited messages from any source that consists of obscene, suggestive, illegal, offensive, pornographic or objectionable content.
- Students will not access another person's materials, information, or files without the implied or direct permission of that person. Users will not attempt to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic communications of any other person.
- Students will not harm the goodwill and reputation of the school or system in the community.
- Students will not run or load any unauthorized software on school computers.

### **IPAD CARE**

All iPads are St. Rita School property and users will follow the Acceptable Use Policy.

All iPads are to remain in school in the area designated by the student's teacher.

Cords and cables are to be inserted carefully into the iPad to prevent damage.

iPads and their cases must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, labels or other forms of personalization that are not the property of SRS.

iPads must always be within their protective iPad case.

iPads are to be cleaned as designated by the teacher. (a soft, dry cloth or anti-static cloth, no cleaners of any type).

Charging iPads is the responsibility of each teacher. Teachers in grades 6-8 may assign students to aid in charging iPads with supervision.

Students are not to alter settings without permission (excluding personal settings such as font size, brightness, etc

The device can only be synced with a school provided iTunes account by the school. Only teachers can download music to a student's Ipad.

All apps that teachers require for student I pads are to be authorized by the System Manager.

SRS will synchronize the iPads to contain the necessary apps for school work. Students will not synchronize iPads or add apps through a personal iTunes account. The software/apps originally installed by SRS must remain on the Ipad in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times.

Periodic checks of iPads will be made to ensure that students have not removed required apps and/or synced to a personal Itunes account.

USERS HAVE NO PRIVACY RIGHT TO ANY DATA RECEIVED OR DISSEMINATED ON THE NETWORK AND BY UTILIZING THESE ST. RITA SYSTEMS, THEY CONSENT TO ST. RITA SCHOOL'S RIGHT TO AUDIT ALL COMMUNICATIONS, FILES AND DOCUMENTS. IF A USER ACTS INAPPROPRIATELY THROUGH THE COMMUNICATIONS AND/OR STORAGE SYSTEMS, ST. RITA SCHOOL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REPORT SUCH ACTIONS TO ANY OUTSIDE AUTHORITIES AND/OR TAKE APPROPRIATE INTERNAL DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

### **Student Responsibility Agreement 1 to 1 Digital Devices Program**

Learning technology resources are available to all St Rita's students. School email accounts are provided for each student for use in curriculum related activities and communication with teachers. The smooth operation of the school computer network relies on the proper conduct of the users who must adhere to the following agreement.

#### **As a responsible user I agree that:**

The student's digital device, email accounts, blogs, personal web pages, or any other computer-based systems provided by the School for student use are not private and may be viewed by staff at any time.

#### **1. Looking after myself**

- *Learning technologies at St Rita's (including the Internet) are for learning related activities. I acknowledge that my device is a learning tool and NOT for gaming, watching videos or instant messaging, etc while at school. Any violation will result in the loss of my user rights and/or further disciplinary action.*

- While at school, I will ONLY log onto the St Rita's network, or school provided digital device using only my OWN username and password, provided by the School. I will keep my user information to myself and not share it with others.
- I will treat all learning technologies (iPads, devices, desktops and other technology) with respect and due care. Vandalism, graffiti, or any attempt to harm or destroy the data of others will result in the loss of my user rights and/or further disciplinary action.
- I will take care to check the source, accuracy and reliability of any information obtained from the Internet.
- I will not access or store offensive images, video or audio on the device, or any other digital storage device.
- I will immediately report to staff any inappropriate material that is accidentally accessed.
- I will regularly backup my work from my device to my Google Drive and/or other storage media.
- School email accounts and any computer-based material created in a school Google account is not private and may be viewed at any time by school staff members.

**2. Looking after others**

- I will abide by copyright law by not copying and redistributing another person's work, and will acknowledge the owners of copyrighted works when I use it.
- I will not use digital technologies to harass, bully another student or staff member, and will be respectful of others at all times.
- I will not access another's account, folders, files or work.
- I will not reveal personal information such as addresses or contact numbers over the Internet, including my own.
- I understand that I do not have permission to change/disable any administration accounts, passwords or network settings, or to disable any remote management, on any school supplied device and its software as these are managed by the School to allow access to the school network and the necessary learning materials.
- I understand that engagement in online blogs or postings, such as, but not limited to, MySpace.com®, Xanga®, Friendster®, Facebook®, YouTube®, etc., shall result in disciplinary actions, including expulsion, if the content of the student's blogs or postings includes defamatory comments regarding the school, a person's dignity, bullying, harassment, threats, or other inappropriate comments that are contradictory to Catholic teaching.

**3. Looking after property**

- I will properly store and fully charge my device each evening in preparation for the next school day.
- I will not leave my device unattended at any time.
- I understand that I am not to use my device outside (playground or walkways) during recess and lunchtime, unless specifically directed by a staff member to do so.
- I will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that my device is kept clean and not lost or damaged.
- I will not modify the application or operating system software provided on any school-supplied device without the permission of the Network Administrators.
- I will not knowingly introduce a virus or other harmful software.
- I understand as with any materials that are the property of St. Rita's, the care and maintenance of the iPads, devices, desktops and other technology and related peripherals are the responsibility of the student while in their care. **If it is determined that student negligence contributed to the loss or damage of an iPad, device, desktop, or other technology, the student/ family will be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement.**

***I have read and agree to abide by all the expectations listed above. Failure to abide by these expectations will result in the cancellation of my user rights and /or further disciplinary consequences in accordance with the School Discipline and/or Bullying Policy.***

Student Name: (Please print neatly) ..... Homeroom: .....  
 Student Signature: ..... Date: .....  
 Parent/Guardian: ..... Date: .....

The Parent/Guardian/Student Agreement and Signature verification form covers ALL the policies included in this handbook as well as any policies held by the Archdiocese of Hartford. In the event a policy is revised, removed or added it will be published in the weekly Notes and Notes.

**RIGHT TO AMEND**

The Administration reserves the right to amend the contents of this Handbook for just cause.

2016-2017

**PARENT / GUARDIAN / STUDENT AGREEMENT  
AND SIGNATURE VERIFICATION FORM**

Please download/print/copy this form and return it to the school office **by Friday, September 16, 2016.**

**We have read and agree to comply with the contents of the  
St. Rita School Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook  
This includes the Acceptable Use Policy**

Parent/Guardian Signature(s) :

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student(s) Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **I do not** give permission for my child's/ren pictures to be used in any public relations item that the school is issuing. This may include, newspaper articles, advertising posters, brochures, school publications and websites.

FAMILY NAME (please print):

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

