VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

2026-2027

St. Teresa Catholic School
1108 Lebanon Avenue, Belleville, IL 62221
Phone: 618-235-4066
https://www.stteresatigers.org/

Dear Volunteers,

"I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do."
John 13:15

May this letter serve as a sign of my gratitude for your willingness to share your time and talent with the faith community of St. Teresa School.

The faculty and staff look forward to working with you to promote the value of service as you join in the teaching ministry of the Church. I encourage you to ask for help, direction, or advice as you participate in the numerous opportunities to volunteer.

All volunteers must complete the Diocese of Belleville's Child Protection requirements, including the required VIRTUS training and compliance process. First-time volunteers must create a VIRTUS account and follow the prompts to complete all required steps.

Returning volunteers should log in to their existing accounts and complete any items shown in red on their VIRTUS dashboards.

Information about the volunteer process is available through the Diocese of Belleville Child Protection webpage or the St. Teresa School Important Forms webpage.

Additional information about these requirements is included in this handbook. Please contact Ms. Tewell in the school office if you have any questions or need assistance.

Together, let us pray that God, who began this good work in us, will carry it through to completion.

Thank you for the priceless gift of your service and for helping make St. Teresa School such a special community.

In gratitude,

Nicole Green
Principal

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WELCOME TO ST. TERESA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

We Believe...
We are disciples of Jesus Christ.
We are committed to academic excellence.
We are called to serve and lead others.

Volunteer Handbook Mission Statement

"For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve…" (Mark 10:45)

Research indicates that parent volunteerism in schools enhances student self-esteem, increases academic achievement and improves student behavior and attendance. We appreciate the priceless service that you provide to St. Teresa School, and we have created this Volunteer Handbook to assist you. We want to make sure that you are well informed on all aspects of volunteering at St. Teresa School.

Mission Statement of St. Teresa School

St. Teresa Catholic School, an integral component of St. Teresa Church, serves the community by passing on the Catholic Faith and values while immersing the student within a Christ-centered environment.

A continued partnership of St. Teresa Parish, families, and staff within a tradition of academic excellence will provide students the opportunity to learn about the Church's teachings, to incorporate them in their daily lives, and to take an active role in addressing social concerns.

We are committed to the children and their families, who desire the best in Catholic education.

Philosophy

Education at St. Teresa School is a gradual development of the human person through the inspiration of the Divine. It is a continuation and an enrichment of what is begun in the home that strives to develop the spiritual, academic, social, and psychological aspects of the child.

The philosophy of the school is based on the principle that Catholic schools are to be communities of faith, in which the Christian message, the experience of community, worship, and social concern are integrated in the total educational experiences of the students, their parents and members of the faculty.

Our school, in accordance with the above principles established by the United States bishops in their Catechetical Statement, *Commitment to Catholic Elementary Schools in the Third Millennium*, focuses on trying to maintain the highest possible standards of education. As a faith community, and as a member of an educational institution, the faculty of St. Teresa's determines specific objectives each year to further the accomplishment of these goals.

In order to achieve the knowledge and skills required by our society for genuine participation and leadership in the world of tomorrow, as well as to achieve the openness of mind and generosity of spirit needed to attain a sincere concern for all humanity, it is presumed that **parents who enroll their children in St. Teresa School will share this responsibility with their students**.
The school will attempt to provide a Catholic environment in which ethnic and cultural diversity is recognized and supported. Awareness and respect for multi-cultural churches and nations will be developed in each grade.

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Volunteer Application Process

All volunteers must complete the Diocese of Belleville's Child Protection requirements through VIRTUS.

First-Time Volunteers Must:

- Create a VIRTUS account through the Diocese of Belleville Child Protection webpage.
- Follow the prompts to complete all required steps and forms.
- Review and retain a copy of the Diocesan Code of Conduct for their records.

Returning Volunteers Must:

- Log in to their existing VIRTUS account.
- Complete all items shown in red on their VIRTUS dashboard. These may include a CANTS renewal or refresher training.
- Respond promptly to the electronic CANTS request emailed from **Dcfs.CFS689BackgroundCheck@illinois.gov**.

Additional volunteer information and school forms are available on the St. Teresa School Important Forms webpage.

All information provided will be handled confidentially. Please contact Ms. Tewell in the St. Teresa School office if you have questions or need assistance.

Child protection is essential for the safety and protection of our children.

Volunteer Service

Volunteers at St. Teresa Catholic School generously share their time and talents without the expectation of compensation or anything in return. Serving in the ministry of Catholic education is a privilege, not a right. The principal reserves the right to discontinue the service of any volunteer when it is determined to be in the best interest of the students or school community.

School Hours

Grades Pre-K through 8 are in class from 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM. The School doors are opened for students at 7:30 AM.

School Office Hours

The school office is open on all school days from **7:30 AM – 3:30 PM**.

Sign-In Procedure

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to wear a designated badge or sticker that may be picked up in the office. Visitors and/or volunteers are to return the badge and sign out at the time of departure.

Dependability

The school relies on the dependability of its volunteers. Volunteers are expected to arrive on time for scheduled assignments and notify the supervising teacher or staff member as soon as possible if they are unable to volunteer.

Confidentiality

A volunteer operates in a position of trust. Personal information pertaining to students must be kept confidential. Children's actions, responses, progress, or problems at school are not for sharing in the community. Conversations between parents, teachers and students in the school are confidential. Volunteers should not discuss these conversations outside of school. Refer any concerns to the Administration. All volunteers will be required to sign the Volunteer Pledge.

Social Media & Technology

In accordance with Diocese of Belleville Policy 1152, volunteers may not post photographs, videos, or comments involving students, employees, or other volunteers on social media without expressed written consent. While serving in an official volunteer capacity, volunteers should not photograph students unless authorized by a teacher or school administrator. Concerns regarding the school should be addressed privately with the appropriate teacher or administrator. Violations may result in dismissal from volunteer service.

Health and Safety

A First-Aid kit will be available on every field trip. Chaperones should at no time administer any medication to a student. These medications include, but are not limited to, over-the-counter medications.

Volunteer Dress

Although volunteers are not required to follow the student dress code, they are expected to dress modestly and appropriately while volunteering at school or during school-sponsored activities. Clothing should reflect the Catholic values and professional image of St. Teresa School. Skirts and shorts should be an appropriate length, and tops should provide adequate coverage. Clothing that is excessively tight, revealing, torn, or displays inappropriate words or images are not permitted.

Responsibility

The administration of St. Teresa Catholic School is responsible for supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the volunteer program. Our faculty and staff are committed to welcoming volunteers, clearly explaining their responsibilities, encouraging their contributions, and recognizing their service.

Volunteers are expected to follow all school policies and procedures, complete assigned tasks to the best of their abilities, work cooperatively and respectfully with faculty and staff, and ask for clarification or assistance whenever needed.

Inclement Weather

If St. Teresa School must close due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions, an announcement will be shared through KMOV Channel 4 News, a phone notification through FACTS, the St. Teresa School Facebook page, and the St. Teresa School website. Volunteers should check these sources for the most current information before reporting to the school.

Emergency Drills

St. Teresa School conducts fire, severe-weather, law-enforcement, and other required safety drills throughout the school year. During any drill or emergency, volunteers must remain calm, follow the

directions of school employees, and assist with the supervision of their assigned students. Volunteers may not leave their assigned area or reenter the building until authorized by school personnel.

Field Trips

Field-trip chaperones must follow all school rules and the directions of the teacher or designated school employee.

1. Chaperones must complete all Diocesan Child Protection requirements before volunteering.
2. Chaperones must be at least 21 years of age.
3. Chaperones may not bring siblings or other children on the field trip, regardless of their age or relationship.
4. Chaperones must remain with their assigned group and actively supervise students at all times. Socializing with other adults should not interfere with supervision.
5. A chaperone's own child must be treated in the same manner as every other student.
6. Smoking, vaping, and the use of electronic cigarettes are prohibited.
7. Chaperones should dress modestly and appropriately for the activity. Teachers will communicate any specific dress expectations.
8. Personal cellphone use should be limited to emergencies or communication related to the field trip.
9. Students may not use a chaperone's cellphone.
10. Chaperones should not provide students with food, snacks, or money unless authorized by the teacher.
11. Chaperones may not post photographs, videos, or comments involving students on social media without expressed written consent.
12. Chaperones must immediately report any accident, injury, behavioral concern, or unusual situation to the supervising teacher.

A chaperone's primary responsibility is the safety and supervision of the students assigned to their care.

Right to Amend

St. Teresa School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to volunteers.

**The following sections (Child Safety & Legal Issues) derived from the Diocese of Belleville Policies.*

CHILD SAFETY & LEGAL ISSUES

Supervision of Students

The safety and well-being of every student are the highest priorities of St. Teresa Catholic School. Volunteers must follow all school and Diocesan Child Protection policies, including the following expectations:

- Students may be released only to a parent, legal guardian, or another individual authorized by the parent or legal guardian.
- Volunteers should avoid being alone with a student. Activities involving students must take place in observable and interruptible locations with appropriate adult supervision.
- Volunteers must actively supervise the students assigned to them and may not leave students unattended.
- Volunteers may not use corporal punishment, physical discipline, threatening language, humiliation, harassment, or intimidation.
- Unusual, unsafe, or uncontrollable student behavior must be reported promptly to the supervising teacher or school administrator.
- Volunteers may not administer medication or provide food to a student without authorization from school personnel.
- Written parental permission and required medical information must be obtained before students participate in field trips or activities involving potential risk.
- Students should use the buddy system during field trips and other activities away from school property.
- Volunteers must immediately report accidents, injuries, safety concerns, or suspected violations of school or Diocesan policy to the supervising teacher or administrator.
- Volunteer time may not be used to address personal matters involving a volunteer's own child. Questions or concerns regarding grades, behavior, classroom decisions, or other school matters must be addressed through the school's regular communication and conference procedures—not while volunteering or supervising students.
- Volunteers must remain in their assigned area and perform only the duties for which they have been approved. They may not leave their assigned group, visit another classroom or office, or enter other areas of the building without permission from the supervising teacher or staff member.

Safe Environment Commitment

St. Teresa Catholic School is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and faith-filled environment that protects the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of every child. All volunteers must comply with the Diocese of Belleville Child Protection Policy and complete all required screening, training, and documentation through VIRTUS before beginning volunteer service.

Volunteers are expected to:

- Treat every person with dignity, respect, fairness, and compassion.
- Maintain appropriate physical, emotional, and communication boundaries with students.
- Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the teachings and values of the Catholic Church.
- Protect confidential information learned while volunteering.
- Avoid conduct that could be considered abusive, intimidating, discriminatory, harassing, manipulative, or exploitative.

- Use school, parish, and Diocesan resources responsibly.
- Promptly report suspected abuse, neglect, misconduct, or unsafe behavior to the appropriate authorities.

Volunteers must review and acknowledge the current Diocesan Code of Conduct as part of the Diocese of Belleville Child Protection compliance process. Disregarding these standards may result in dismissal from volunteer service.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

St. Teresa Catholic School follows the laws of the State of Illinois and the Child Protection Policy of the Diocese of Belleville.

Any volunteer who observes or receives information that reasonably suggests a child may have been abused or neglected must make a prompt report. The volunteer should not investigate the allegation or attempt to determine whether it is true.

Reports must be made to:

- **Illinois Department of Children and Family Services:**
  1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873)
- **Local law enforcement**

Non-emergency and non-life-threatening concerns may also be reported through the Illinois DCFS Online Reporting System.

After reporting to DCFS and local law enforcement, the volunteer must immediately notify the principal so that the Diocese's internal reporting requirements can also be followed. Informing the principal does not replace the volunteer's responsibility to report to the proper civil authorities.

If a child is in immediate danger, call **911**.

Diocesan Code of Conduct

As personnel of the Diocese of Belleville, volunteers agree to exhibit the highest Christian ethical standards and personal integrity and to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the discipline and teachings of the Catholic Church. Volunteers must help provide an environment free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation and harassment; maintain appropriate boundaries; and never physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or adult. Volunteers accept personal responsibility for protecting children from all forms of abuse and must promptly report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-2873, as well as follow all additional reporting requirements of the Diocese of Belleville. Volunteers must review and acknowledge the current Diocesan Code of Conduct as part of the Diocese of Belleville Child Protection compliance process.

PTO Elected Officers
2026-2027

President
Sheila Faszold

Vice-President
Kelly Neighbors

Treasurer
Kate Lange

Secretary
Tiffany Kraus

2026 - 2027 PTO Volunteer Opportunities

Auction Committee

Back to School Bash

Box Tops

Dining Fundraisers

Lunch Recess

Open House / Welcome Yard Signs

Room Parents and Classroom Volunteers

Teacher Appreciation

Tiger Skate

Trunk or Treat

Uniform Resale

OTHER ST. TERESA SCHOOL & PARISH VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Field Day, Pumpkin Patch, Thursday Night Bingo, Book Fair, Santa's Kottage, Parish Picnic, Advent Family Fair, Vacation Bible School, Daddy-Daughter Dance, Fish Frys, Children & Youth Masses and Holiday Game Night

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

AUCTION AND GALA
Chair Responsibilities: Planning, scheduling and organizing the school's largest fundraiser which takes place every year. Manage a budget and solicit sponsors to help fund the event and coordinate sub committees.

Chair Time Commitment: Significant

List of Committee chairs:
Auction Website Chair: Design and manage auction website and online auction.

Donations Chair: Request donations from area businesses and school families. Wish list provided. Work with school staff to coordinate school items.

Decorations Chair: Table centerpieces & general room decorations.

Finance Chair: Manage budget and track expenses.

Invitations/Save-the-Dates Chair: Create Save-the-Dates and invitations, and coordinate distribution to school families and other outlets.

Auction Book Chair: Creates the Auction book.

Sponsorship Chair: Requests sponsorships from local businesses and school families.

Dinner/Menu Chair: Works with the venue/caterer to create the event menu. Secures alcohol donation from local distributor. Purchases and delivers soda and water to the venue.

Emcee/Games Chair: Emcees the event. Creates and plays any games during the event.

Bakery Booth Chair: Coordinates and sets up the Bakery Booth for the event. Coordinates drop of bakery items and prices items.

Class Project Chair: Works with the room parents to secure class projects and baskets for the event.

Sign-up Parties Chair: Work with school families and staff to coordinate sign-up parties.

Student Video & Photos chair: Create the student auction promo video and take student photos for the night of the event.

Tiger Spirit Raffle Chair: Works with the school and raffle vendor to set up and manage the raffle ticket sales.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL BASH
Chair Responsibilities: Plan and organize the event. Schedule volunteers to work shifts throughout the event.

Volunteer Responsibilities: The Back-to-School Bash is an event that occurs in August. Volunteers set up for the event, serve families, and clean up after the event.

Volunteer Time Commitment: 30 Minute to One-hour shifts

DINING FUNDRAISERS

Chair Responsibilities: Coordinates and organizes dine to donate fundraisers throughout the school year at local restaurants and businesses. Chair is also responsible for communicating fundraisers to school families and staff.

Chair Time Commitment: Varies

LUNCH RECESS

Volunteer Responsibilities: Assisting school staff in the cafeteria during student lunch hours. Monitoring the students during indoor and outdoor recess.

Volunteer time commitment: 3 hours from 10:30 to 1:30

OPEN HOUSE/WELCOME YARD SIGNS

Chair Responsibilities: Coordinates and organizes yard signs and welcome letters to new students including all Kindergarten, Pre-K , Preschool and new families.

Chair Time Commitment: Varies

Volunteer Responsibilities: Volunteers will assist with handing out yard signs and welcome letters to new student families.

Volunteer Time Commitment: Varies

ROOM PARENTS & CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Chair Responsibilities: Chair is the link between the Room Parents and the administration. Chair is responsible for sending out communications to room parents regarding reminders for events and last minute volunteer needs. Chair is also responsible for communication with the homeroom teacher.

Chair Time Commitment: Varies

Room Parent Volunteer Responsibilities: Volunteers act as a link between the teacher and the parents to communicate information. Volunteers organize class parties and assist with materials and activities as requested by teachers. Teachers may also ask volunteers to assist with other activities. One room parent per grade is required to attend the monthly PTO meeting.

Volunteer Time Commitment: Varies

Class Party Volunteer Responsibilities: Party volunteers are responsible for facilitating and overseeing Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day classroom parties.

Volunteer Time Commitment: 1 hour for each party attended

TEACHER APPRECIATION
Teacher Appreciation committee coordinates teacher and staff gifts and meals throughout the school year, including teacher appreciation week.

Chair Responsibilities: Coordinating and implementing activities to honor St. Teresa teachers.

Volunteer Responsibilities: Volunteers assist with:
- Planning gifts and meals
- Setting up for luncheons and picking up food
- Organizing and delivering gifts to school for the teachers

Volunteer Time Commitment: Varies

TIGER SKATE
Chair Responsibilities: Coordinate and organize Tiger Skate in the fall and the spring for the St. Teresa School students.

Chair Time Commitment: Varies

Volunteer Responsibilities: Volunteers will assist supervision of students during the event.

Volunteer Time Commitment: Approximately 2 hours during Tiger Skate.

TRUNK OR TREAT
Chair Responsibilities: Coordinate and organize Trunk or Treat for the St. Teresa School and Parish families.

Chair Time Commitment: Varies

Volunteer Responsibilities: Volunteers will assist with set-up and clean-up at the event, as well as help directing traffic in and out of the parking lot.

Volunteer Time Commitment: Approximately 2 hours during Trunk or Treat, and varies otherwise

UNIFORM RE-SALE
Chair Responsibilities: Coordinate and organize the used uniform sale at St. Teresa School.

Chair Time Commitment: Varies

Volunteer Responsibilities: Volunteers will sort new donations, organize and provide upkeep for uniform areas.
Volunteer Time Commitment: Approximately 2 hours during Open House, and varies otherwise.

VOLUNTEER PLEDGE

I pledge to volunteer my time and talents in service
to the children of St. Teresa Catholic School.

I will uphold the expectations of the role of volunteer by observing guidelines outlined in the Volunteer Handbook and by being committed to my duties.

I promise to respect the confidentiality of the students, faculty and staff.

I have read and understand St. Teresa's mission statement and will follow the rules, policies and procedures outlined in the Volunteer Handbook to the best of my ability.

Volunteer Signature_____

Date_____

Please sign, date, and return to the Principal's Office.