

August 2011

Dear TCMS Families:

The motto of Taunton Catholic Middle School is “Together we serve, together we share, and together we walk humbly with God always at our sides.” As a school community, we strive to live this motto each day in all we do with and for each other.

As we come to the end of the first decade of the 21st century, we look forward to the challenges awaiting all of us, especially our students and their families. Some of these challenges include preparing adolescents with Christian values for making the right choices, providing our students with strong academic foundations in all subjects, and incorporating growing advancements in technology as tools for learning. Meeting these challenges develops our students as faith-filled Catholics and informed citizens.

In addition to challenges, early adolescence is a time of social and physical development, a time of personal discovery, and a time for exploring individual interests and talents. We encourage students to take full advantage of the well-rounded experiences offered at TCMS by participating in extracurricular activities—campus ministry, choir, clubs, athletics, programs, presentations, concerts, visual and performing arts, and other such activities. Students, who focus on meeting the educational challenges in their classrooms and participate in a variety of activities, graduate from TCMS prepared to meet the demands of high school, college and beyond.

As school leader, I look forward to getting to know our students and their families. Feel free to call or email me with any questions or concerns you might have. Be sure to use our website and Moodle as valuable sources of information such as weekly memos, monthly calendars, communication with teachers, etc.

May God bless each of you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Corinne R. Merritt
Principal

Directories

TAUNTON CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

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The Roman Catholic Diocese of Fall River lead by
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Taunton Catholic Middle School

Faculty and Staff Directory

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Accreditations and Memberships

National Catholic Educational Association - NCEA
New England Association of Schools & Colleges, Inc. NEASC
New England League of Middle Schools- NELMS
American School Counselor Association- ASCA
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development- ASCD
New England Association of Catholic Development Officers- NEACDO
National Junior Honor Society – NJHS
National Association of Secondary Schools - NASS

Taunton Catholic Middle School Mission Statement

The mission of Taunton Catholic Middle School is to educate by inspiring and to encourage by nurturing the Catholic values of the Gospel message, as proclaimed by Jesus Christ, in our community of today, so as to proclaim those values in our world of tomorrow.

The Vision of Taunton Catholic Middle School

Taunton Catholic Middle School, under the direction of the Diocese of Fall River, is a comprehensive, co-educational preparatory middle school, for grades 5-8, located in Taunton, Massachusetts, serving the southeastern communities of Massachusetts.

The school, originally established by the Sisters of the Holy Union, is committed to educating, inspiring, and nurturing young adolescents as they achieve academic success and personal potential in a faith-filled, safe, and respectful environment. The compassionate professional staff, adhering to the diocesan, state, and national standards, cultivates a student-centered school community.

On our journey we, the members of our school community, dedicate ourselves to serve our school, our family, and our global community, to communicate openly and honestly, to promote social justice, and most importantly, to walk humbly with God always at our sides.

School Motto

Together we serve,

together we share, and

together we walk humbly with God always at our sides.

Diocese of Fall River Mission Statement for the Catholic Schools

The Office of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Fall River is rooted in the gospel message of Jesus Christ. This message is carried out according to the authentic teachings of the Catholic Church in union with the Diocesan Bishop who is the Chief Teacher in the Diocese.

The Office of Catholic Schools works collaboratively with parochial and diocesan school communities to provide a faith centered, holistic, values-based Catholic school experience. Our students are educated and encouraged to live out their lives as vibrant and committed members of our Church, and – as persons of faith – to be responsible and contributing citizens of their community, our nation and the world.

We pledge:

To assist families, the primary educators, and their children entrusted to our care.

To work collaboratively with pastors, teachers, and Catholic school administrators in fulfilling the Church's teaching and evangelizing mission in the Catholic schools of the Diocese.

“All Schools in the Diocese of Fall River are subject to the policies of the Diocese of Fall River. The **policy manuals of the Diocese of Fall River replace and supersede any contrary statement of policy, procedures, programs or practices, including but not limited to, any such statement contained in any handbook or manual prepared by any school in the Diocese of Fall River.”

**These manuals are available to be read at the Catholic Education Center, 423 Highland Avenue, Fall River, MA 02720

History of Taunton Catholic Middle School

Taunton Catholic Middle School opened its doors for the first time in September, 1971. That autumn, more than five hundred students were enrolled in grades six through eight, coming primarily from the parochial, elementary schools of Immaculate Conception, St. Jacques, St. Anthony, St. Mary, St. Joseph, Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Lourdes, in Taunton. In the years that followed, all but two of these elementary schools have closed and the city's parochial educational system has undergone changes. Monsignor Coyle High School, for boys, merged with Bishop Cassidy High School, for girls, becoming the co-ed, Coyle and Cassidy High School quartered in the former Bishop Cassidy High School building, thus making space available for the first diocesan middle school, Taunton Catholic Middle School.

Over the course of its existence, six school leaders have guided the school. Sister Mary Bridget McGettigan, SUSA, was the first principal, from 1971 to 1978; followed by Sister Patricia Mulryan, SUSA, from 1978 to 1989. Kathleen A. Simpson, the first lay person, held the position as principal from 1989 to 2002. Robert A. Jeffrey completed a three year tenure as principal, followed by Margaret S. Menear from 2005 to 2010. Dr. Corinne R. Merritt is currently the principal of Taunton Catholic Middle School. Each person has accomplished his or her goals with unique style and commitment. Originally, Holy Union Sisters and teachers from the Sisters of Mercy and Dominicans comprised the majority of the faculty, with few lay teachers. Through the years, the number of religious on staff has dwindled and in recent years the staff was comprised solely of lay people. The most recent religious on staff from 1998 to 2003, Sister Marie Baldi, SUSA, left her position as seventh grade Science and Religion teacher to assume the position of Principal of St. Michael's School, in Fall River. At the beginning of the 2005-2006 year, TCMS was once again staffed solely by dedicated, lay people.

Over its thirty-two year existence many priests have served as Chaplain of the school. Rev. Raymond Monty was the first, followed by Rev. William Babbitt, for one year. Rev. Arnold Medeiros was the school chaplain for fifteen years. He was followed by Rev. Gerald Barnwell, Rev. Michael Camara and Rev. Douglas Souza, each for a year. Rev. Pawel Swiercz began his chaplaincy in 1996 and remained until 2000. He was followed by Rev. Maurice Gauvin, for a year and in the school year of 2001-02 Taunton Catholic Middle School had no Chaplain and relied on the various priests of the Taunton Deanery for assistance. Rev. Jeffrey Cabral, ordained a few months before his appointment as Chaplain, served the School for one year and was transferred to Coyle and Cassidy High School as their Chaplain. The Diocese, appointed Rev. David Pregana as Chaplain for the 2003-2004 school year. The school

is currently seeking a chaplain for the 2011-2012 school year.

Home and School Association and Student Council were established in 1973. The Student Council remains active in the School. In 1996, following a few years of decline in membership and attendance in events, the Home and School Association ended and a new system of parent involvement, the TCMS-VIPS was initiated. Today, TCMS families have the opportunity to serve the school community either as members of the School Advisory Council or Parent Ambassador Committee. Parents, students and staff continue to give countless volunteer hours of service planning and executing a variety of events, each year. Spaghetti Suppers, Thanksgiving Food Baskets, decorating the tree on the Green, Science Fairs, Catholic Schools Week, Open House and Registration, Butler Basketball Tournament, TCMS Invitational Quiz Bowl, Welcome-A-Child, Walk-a-thons and many more events have been established as traditional events each year. Special events such as 9/11 Memorial Liturgy, the citywide Catholic School Liturgy for Peace, Wing Fling, Walk-a-thon and the Guaimaca Mission Project demonstrate the level of commitment and dedication of all members of the TCMS community.

Taunton Catholic Middle School students have displayed outstanding achievement in academics, accepted to many Catholic, private and public high schools such as: Coyle and Cassidy High School, Bishop Stang High School, Bishop Feehan High School, Bishop Connolly High School, Archbishop Williams High School, Cardinal Spellman High School, Notre Dame Academy, Xaverian High School, Catholic Memorial High School, Cushing Academy, Portsmouth Abbey, Ursuline Academy, Sacred Heart High School, Boston College High School, Fontbonne Academy, Tabor Academy, Thayer Academy, Bristol County Agricultural High School, Norfolk County Agricultural High School, South Shore Vocational Technical High School, Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School, Bristol-Plymouth High School, and Providence Country Day.

Student achievements have been publicized by the Anchor, Boston Sunday Globe, Fall River Herald News, Brockton Enterprise and the Taunton Gazette. Dozens of students qualify for the President's Education Awards each year. Many students qualify for the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth Search where students often score with distinction on the Verbal and Math SAT. Language Arts students participate in the Respect Life Essay Contest. Students placing first or second in the TCMS Science Fair advance to the Regional and State Science Fairs, successfully competing for awards. The Science Olympiad Team competes annually at MIT receiving several awards, and the Mock Trial Team has finished first in Southeastern Massachusetts for 2008-2010. Students received a number of awards for the Lions' Club World Peace Poster Contest.

For summer enrichment, students are regularly accepted to the Advanced Studies Program at Bridgewater State College and College Academy at Stonehill College. Students may compete in local, state and national art contests, winning the Channel Five, Let's Make A Difference Contest, Handicapped Awareness Poster Contest, and Up With Kids.

Drama Club continues to provide the community with quality cultural productions of seasonal interest. The 2002 Christmas production was written by the students who performed it. The Club continues to invite clients of Bethany House and the Wise Program, both adult day care programs, to a luncheon and viewing dress rehearsal of each play. The Taunton Catholic Middle School Sports Program continues to be an important facet of personal growth for many. Citywide championships and tournaments have been won by both girls and boys track, soccer, baseball, softball, and basketball teams. All students are encouraged to participate in the various after-school programs that exist and an after-school program is in place to assist families with transportation after regular dismissal to buses.

Spiritual growth comes to the students in many ways. The TCMS community regularly participates in liturgies and prayer services. Monday mornings begin with either a student-prepared prayer service or the rosary for peace. Living Rosary, community service, altar servers, Stations of the Cross, Passion plays and Holy Thursday Hunger Meals all play an important part of our spiritual experience. Each grade level and the faculty attend an annual retreat especially designed for the group.

As we look to the future, encouraged by our past, we continue to grow as a community of Christian people, unified by mutual trust and respect for one another. We continue to develop individuals who are well-rounded spiritually, intellectually, socially and physically; recognizing that our responsibility is not only to our school community, but also to our global community.

General School Regulations & Policies

Academics

Grading System

The grading system is:

A+	97-100	C+	77-79	O	Outstanding
A	94-96	C	74-76	S	Satisfactory
A-	90-93	C-	70-73	NI	Needs Improvement
B+	87-89	D+	68-69	X	No Grade
B	84-86	D	65-67	I	Incomplete
B-	80-83	F	64 & below	F	Failed

Any report card grade of “I” (Incomplete) must be addressed within 2 weeks of the issue of report cards. After the 2 weeks, outstanding “I’s” will become F’s unless there are extenuating circumstances. Ex: Hospitalization, etc.

Progress Reports

Mid-trimester progress reports are issued three times per year. The purpose of these reports is to inform parents and students on how they are progressing in all subjects during each trimester. Parents should feel free to contact individual teachers as needed to discuss their child’s status. The grading system for progress reports is:

VG-Very Good	S - Satisfactory	P - Poor
G- Good		NI-Needs Improvement

Report Cards

Report cards are also issued on a trimester basis. These include letter grades, according to the grading system, and comments for all subjects scheduled for a student within that trimester. Mini-course grades will appear following completion of the course.

Academic Monitoring

Friday Folders: Friday folders are sent home weekly in all grades. Please review your child’s work, sign the form and have your child return the empty folder to the homeroom teacher. Contracts are sometimes developed for individual students by arrangement with the grade level teachers.

Usage and parental monitoring of the student **Agenda Book** is the best method of home -school communication. All parents should check the book often to be sure that students are using this important organizational tool. Assignments may be checked online through MOODLE. Please contact the office if you do not have your child’s login and password.

Academic Honor Roll

High Honors:	A's
Honors:	A's and B's
Honorable Mention:	B's

For all honor roll categories, students must have "S" or better in all Special Subjects and no incomplete grades in any subject.

Students who have A's or B's for final grades in all subjects for grades 6, 7, and 8 graduate from TCMS with Honors.

Academic Probation

Students earning more than 1 grade below a C- in an academic subject and earning an F or NI in an exploratory class on a report card will be placed on academic probation. Students earning more than 1 grade below an S in an academic subject and earning a P or NI in an exploratory class on a progress report will be placed on academic probation. Academic probation will remain in effect until the following report card or progress report is issued. A student may also confer with the principal, draw up a contract, and successfully fulfill the contract before the next report card or progress report is issued.

Academic probation means that a student will not be able to participate in extra-curricular activities while on probation.

Promotion

Academic excellence is expected for all students when the student makes the best effort possible in all classes. A student is promoted to the next grade when 5 of the 6 major academic classes are passed with a 65 or above. If a student passes 4 of the 6 academic classes, the student must attend summer school or receive a minimum of 15 hours of tutoring from a certified teacher. A summer school course or tutor must be approved **prior** to beginning the program.

Homework

Homework is an important part of learning. Education is a lifelong process which extends beyond the school. It is important for students to recognize that learning occurs in the home and the community. Homework is one means of teaching the necessary skills of independent study and learning outside the school. Homework is not only written work, but also reading assignments, preparing for tests, viewing news reports or other television programs and other activities assigned by a teacher. Homework should be completed outside of class.

The homeroom teacher provides students with a list of assignments. Assignments are available on-line via **Moodle** at www.catholicmiddle.com.

Agenda Books

During the first week of school, all students will be issued a school agenda book. Students are required to write all class assignments in their agenda, as a reminder of what is due the following day and beyond. Teachers also post class assignments on Moodle for added convenience.

Announcements

A weekly memo is sent directly to parent emails and posted on our school website. There is an online calendar for up to date information. Note: the online calendar is constantly being updated, please check often. Throughout the school year, special announcements regarding activities, programs, schedules, etc. are posted on our website. When requested, these must be signed and returned by the given date. Please check our website regularly for all announcements www.catholicmiddle.com

Athletics

Eligibility

In order to participate in any athletics, the student must be academically, physically and socially eligible.

Physical

Every athlete **must** have a current physical form within 12 months on file with the nurse before participating (trying out, practicing, and contests) in any sport.

Sportsmanship

Students involved in any team sport must show respect to all individuals—coaches, team members, opponents and officials. Any form of disrespect will result in termination of student membership in the sport at the discretion of administration. All athletes must:

1. Exhibit respect for your opponent at all times.
2. Show respect for officials.
3. Display respect and support to each and all team members.
4. Know and observe the rules of the contest.
5. Maintain self control at all times.
6. Recognize and appreciate skill in performance by opponent.

Equipment

Each athlete is issued equipment appropriate for the sport. This equipment is loaned to the athlete who is responsible for its return (cleaned) at the end of the season. The individual athlete must pay for equipment not returned.

Injuries

Injuries must be reported to the coach. For all injuries that require medical treatment, an accident report form must be completed and submitted to the office.

Student Pick-Up

(Following games and practices) Parents should make every effort to pick-up their children or arrange for transportation home within ten minutes following a game or practice. Coaches should not be expected to wait with your child beyond this time. Remember coaches cannot leave until the last child under their supervision has left or gone to ESP. If this becomes a problem, it may be cause for dismissal of your child from athletic participation. Parents should pick up their child up the side door for home events or the student may attend ESP if it is in session.

Attendance

Absence

Parents must call the office by 8:30 a.m. each day a student is absent. A student must present a written excuse to his/her homeroom teacher when he/she returns. If a written absence note from a parent is not received within 3 days following the absence, the student will be issued a school detention by the homeroom teacher. After 5 consecutive days of absence, a doctor's note must be presented before re-admittance. If a student is out for a doctor's appointment, a medical note should be submitted to the office. Students should consult their Moodle account found online at www.catholicmiddle.com to locate any missed classwork and assignments. Students are responsible to meet with teachers when they return to school after an absence to make up work they have missed within the guidelines set by the teachers. When students are absent, they are not permitted to attend or participate in any co-curricular activities, including athletics. Excessive absences (more than 5 per trimester) will be addressed on an individual basis at the discretion of administration.

Early Dismissal

Students must bring a written note from home requesting early dismissal to their homeroom teacher on the morning of the day they wish to be dismissed. Students must be signed out at the office by a parent unless other arrangements are made. For safety reasons, an individual, who is not the student's parent and is picking up a student, **must** present proper identification. Proper identification is a valid driver's license or photo ID. Divorced and/or separated parents must have court-certified custody papers for the current school year, on file with the office. Students who are dismissed before 11:00 AM will incur a half-day absence. **Doctor and/or dentist appointments should be scheduled after school hours.**

Tardiness

The school day begins at 7:50 a.m. each morning. Students are to be in homeroom by 7:50. Students entering homeroom or class after 7:50 AM are to sign in at the office. Homeroom tardiness constitutes a school tardy and is subject to school detention. The administration reserves the right to determine a tardy as unnecessary and therefore unexcused. Excessive/ chronic tardiness will not be tolerated. To accommodate for minor emergencies such as car problems, unexpected car traffic issues, etc., students will be allowed five tardiness for school in the same trimester. Excessive tardiness (more than 5 per trimester) will be addressed on an individual basis at the discretion of administration.

At any time of the day that a student arrives to school late, the student must sign in at the Main Office for an Admit Pass. Students who arrive at school at or after 11:00am will incur a half-day absence. **A medical tardy will be recorded when a student brings a note from the doctors' office stating that they were late due to a medical appointment.**

Family Vacations/Trips

Students and parents are advised that extended weekend pleasure trips can only hinder a student's academic progress. Such trips should be avoided. The Main Office is to be notified in writing of the dates students will not be attending prior to leaving school. Upon returning to school after unforeseen, legitimate absences, students are responsible for contacting their teachers immediately regarding all schoolwork missed.

Additionally assignments are available on line on Moodle at www.catholicmiddle.com. This work is to be completed as soon as possible. When students are absent, they are not permitted to attend or participate in any extra-curricular activities, including athletics.

Building Access

Morning

Students are allowed to enter the building at 7:20 AM if they are purchasing breakfast. In good weather students will enter the building at 7:40 AM, go directly to their lockers and then to their homerooms. During inclement weather, students will enter the building upon arrival and go directly to the cafeteria. Students, while out of doors, should group themselves in walkways directly in front of the school building safely away from incoming vehicles.

After School

Students are allowed to be on school property during supervised activities. Students must attend a supervised activity upon dismissal. Any student not in a supervised activity will be sent to the Extended School Program. For student safety, students will not be allowed to wait for transportation outside. Please meet your child at ESP if your child does not leave school upon 2:00 pm dismissal. After 2:10PM, please use the side door to access the school building.

Visitors

In order to guarantee the safety of the students and staff, the outside doors of the school will be locked at all times. At the front door, visitors must use the intercom. Before admission visitors must state their name, nature of business, and the name of their child. All visitors must use the front door and report directly to the Main Office (located immediately to the right after the main entrance stairs).

All visitors must sign in (and out) of the Visitor Register and obtain a Visitor's Pass. Any visits of a social nature, and any former students who wish to visit teachers, may do so after 2:00 pm. **Students are not permitted to admit anyone through any door.**

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for the Diocese of Fall River

“Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family.

The body of Catholic social teaching opens with the human person, but it does not close there. Individuals have dignity; individualism has no place in Catholic social thought. The principle of human dignity gives the human person a claim on membership in a community, the human family.” (Taken from Byron, William J. S.J., *Ten Building Blocks of Catholic Social Teaching*. (2010). America: The National Catholic Weekly. American Press Inc.)

Definitions

The Diocese of Fall River and Taunton Catholic Middle School prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation as defined below. Bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation can occur on or off school property, and during or outside of school hours.

“**Bullying**” is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that : causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; creates a hostile

environment at school for the victim; infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

“Cyber-bullying” is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include: the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions included in the definition of bullying. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

“Retaliation” against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

“Hostile Environment” is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

“Aggressor” is a student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

“Target” is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

“Staff” includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions or programs. (Massachusetts General Laws c. 71 § 37O)

Formal Procedure for Reporting

Students are to report any and all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to teachers or staff. Staff and teachers are to report any and all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to the principal or his or her designee.

Parents, guardians, and others are to report all bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to the principal or his or her designee.

This reporting may be done verbally or in writing. This reporting of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation may be made anonymously; however, no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The principal and his or her designee will respond to and investigate all **credible** reports of bullying, and ensure proper documentation. This investigation will provide for the following:

- **Safety of the target**

The principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidences. Responses to promote safety may include but are not limited to: predetermining seating arrangements in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the classroom schedule to reduce that aggressor’s access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during or after the investigation, as necessary.

- **Protection of the reporter, witness, or provider of information during the investigation**

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting a student who has reported/witnessed or provided information during an investigation of a bullying situation. These responses may include but are not limited to the same responses noted for the safety of the target.

- **Notification, including the parents of both the target and the aggressor, as well as notification of law enforcement**

- a. **Parents/Guardians**: Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- b. **Notice to another school**: If the incident involves students from more than one school, the principal or designee will notify by phone any and all schools so that each may take appropriate action.
- c. **Notice to Catholic Education Center**: After determining that bullying has taken place, notice should be given immediately to the superintendent or his or her designee.
- d. **Notice to law enforcement**: At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the law and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency.

Investigation

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

I. Range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against an aggressor for bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation

Each school in the Diocese of Fall River will include bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation into the age appropriate disciplinary code that is included in the student/parent handbook. These disciplinary codes may include, but are not limited to, suspension and expulsion.

II. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

III. At the discretion of the principal or his or her designee, counseling or referrals to Catholic Social Services will be made available to targets, aggressors, and/or family members.

*****Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent the school administration from taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying, as defined above, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment.***

The policy for harassment of another student applies to any student involved in any type of behavior, which can be considered as harassing. Consequences are as follows:

- 1st infraction – Warning about harassing behavior
- 2nd infraction – Verbal reprimand
- 3rd infraction – Contract with student and parent/guardian
- 4th infraction – In-house exclusion (1 day)
- 5th infraction – External Suspension (1 day)
- 6th infraction – External Suspension (3 day)
- 7th infraction – Expulsion from school

The administration reserves the right to assign any consequence in this hierarchy according to the nature or seriousness of the harassing and/or bullying behavior.

The following offenses are considered serious offenses and are grounds for in-house exclusion or out-of-school suspension, and may lead to expulsion at the discretion of the principal. The diocesan office will be notified. Diocesan policies are followed for these serious offenses:

1. Stealing
2. Fighting
3. Assaults on students or staff
4. Obscene behavior
5. Any form of harassment of student
6. Any form of bullying of a student
7. Situations involving drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons (any object used to threaten or harm others) will result in immediate action by the Administration.
8. Other serious offenses at the discretion of the Principal.

Parents of students who incur a third in-house exclusion are required to meet with the Administration to discuss the possibility of external suspension or expulsion from school.

Parents and students may be asked to sign a behavior contract with the school. Failure to follow through with the guidelines stated in the contract may result in expulsion. Conduct, whether inside or outside school that is detrimental to the reputation of the school may be grounds for expulsion.

Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Policy—Zero Tolerance

Any student judged to have consumed, possessed, bought, sold, passed, or to have been in the process of receiving a controlled, illegal, or dangerous substance (including drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or paraphernalia associated with the same) anywhere on school grounds, or at any time the student's conduct is accountable to the school, must be prepared to accept the following consequences:

1. Selling or passing any type of controlled substance may result in the student being asked to withdraw from the school immediately and transfer to another school.
2. Possession, receiving or use of controlled substances on school premises, or during a school activity may result in the student being asked to withdraw from the school immediately and transfer to another school.
3. All violations of this policy will be treated as a serious offense. Additionally, students who are adjudged to be knowingly in the company of those violating the school's controlled substance policy shall also be considered in violation of said policy.

Any unauthorized or over the counter medication brought to school by a student will be subject to this policy.

Use of an alcohol authorized by a medical prescription, as in cough syrup, from a registered physician will be considered a violation of this rule unless it is given to the school nurse who will administer it according to the prescription during the school day.

Parents and the appropriate legal authorities will be notified.

Busing

Local busing is provided by H. L. Bloom Bus Company, Taunton, MA. Arrangements are made through the Taunton Public Schools, Superintendent's Office. The telephone number is 508-821-1215.

Coyle-Cassidy High School runs *private pay buses* to the Middleborough/Lakeville, Carver/Plymouth, and Easton/Brockton/Stoughton areas. For information call the Coyle-Cassidy Office at 508-823-6164 or 508-823-6165.

Student Conduct

TCMS students have the privilege of being allowed to ride public school buses and the private buses from many area communities. This privilege is not to be taken lightly. They are at all times to honor all rules and regulations governing conduct and safety. The student is not only responsible to the Bus Company, but also to TCMS. The student is a representative of the school prior to, during and immediately following the use of this public transportation. Student behavior, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, will result in disciplinary action by the school. Loss of the privilege to ride is a possibility if the administration deems it appropriate. See Appendix for Bus Conduct Policy Form—to be signed and returned to homeroom teacher.

At the bus stop:

- Student must be on time.
- Students will board and get off the bus at regular stops only.
- Orderly behavior and respect for private property is required.
- Students must follow the instruction and directions of the driver while on the bus.

On the bus:

- Students must remain seated when the bus is in motion.

Any behavior deemed inappropriate in school is also inappropriate on the school bus. All articles such as athletic equipment, backpacks, books, musical instruments, etc., must be kept out of the aisles. No articles or living creatures, which are not related to the education, athletic activity, or health of a student is permitted on the school bus without prior approval of the school bus driver.

In a case of inappropriate behavior on the school bus, the driver will submit the student's name and a written report of the incident to the principal.

- 1st Incident: Parent's will be notified, conference will be held with school principal and student. The student will serve an in-school detention.
- 2nd Incident: All of the above and 1-day bus suspension.
- 3rd Incident: All of the above and up to a 3-day bus suspension.

Any incidents after the 3rd may result in the suspension of bussing privileges for the student for the remainder of the school year. Any incident that defaces or damages the bus will be the responsibility of the student and parent to make restitution for repairs to the bus company.

Riding home with a friend

Taunton School buses require a note from the parents of both the student and the parents of the student's friend, stating that they have permission to ride the bus. Both notes should be brought to the office for approval. After the notes have been signed by the school they are given to the bus driver. The bus driver is not allowed to bring students who have not followed proper procedure.

Cafeteria

We discourage borrowing money from other students and ask that you impress upon your child that being prepared is the best way to avoid having to confront this problem.

Any student who does not have a lunch will be issued a Lunch Pass for the day. A Lunch Pass will be good only for the hot lunch and payment is expected on the next school day. Student will need to go to the office to request a Lunch Pass and make payments. A record will be kept in the office of students who are issued Lunch Passes.

Meal Tickets

Meal tickets may be purchased to cover lunch and breakfast. You may purchase 10 lunches for \$30.00 and up to \$30.00 for a la carte items. Lunch is the posted lunch, beverage, and a dessert. A la carte items include breakfast items, salad, specialty sandwiches, additional beverages, etc. You may use a la carte ticket money to buy lunch, you may not use lunch ticket money to buy a la carte items.

Tickets are to be kept in the cafeteria until all funds have been depleted. The school is not responsible for lost tickets. Student name and homeroom will be on meal tickets; they are not transferable, not for use with vending machines, cannot be used by other students and cannot be exchanged for cash. Students should inform parents when tickets require replacement.

Order forms are available on the website. A sample is included in the Appendix. (Not submitting the order form may delay processing).

Lunch Passes

A Lunch Pass will be issued to a student whose meal ticket has expired or has forgotten their lunch money. A Lunch Pass is valid only for the posted lunch of the day. Lunch Passes can be deducted from a new meal ticket or to be paid to the office the next day. Students should never have more than one outstanding Lunch Pass.

Rules of Cafeteria

A cooperative effort on everyone's part will result in an efficient operation of the school lunch program.

1. Each student is responsible for cleaning the table after eating. Students must remove trays, dishes, and utensils from the table before leaving the cafeteria. Beverages other than water are not to be consumed on school property at any time during school hours other than in the cafeteria. Students will remain at their seat in the cafeteria during lunch period.
2. Students are to conduct themselves in an orderly manner in passing to and from the cafeteria and while in the cafeteria.
3. A designated eating area will be assigned to those students not able to follow cafeteria rules.
4. All food and beverage will be consumed in the cafeteria. Outside food deliveries to the students are not acceptable.
5. Students will stay in the cafeteria during lunch time unless special permission is granted.
6. Birthday parties or celebrations will not take place within the lunchroom or within the school day. This includes but is not limited to locker decorations, food deliveries, balloon and/or flower bouquets or singing telegrams.
7. Carbonated beverages are not allowed during lunch.

We are now participating in the USDA's Milk Program and government guidelines do not allow for carbonated beverages to be consumed during lunch periods. Carbonated beverages cannot be sold or brought from home.

Computers

Computer Use and Policies

1. No disks may be brought into the lab. Any disk found in the lab becomes school property.
2. No food or drink is allowed in the lab at any time.
3. Gum chewing is never allowed. Students found with gum or candy will be given a detention.
4. Students may not arrive late. For exceptional reasons, a student may be admitted late, only if a pass is presented. Students may not leave the lab before the end of the period.
5. Personal belongings must be placed in the designated area upon entering the lab.
6. Each student must log in with his/her proper username and password. The Computer Technology Teacher may assign computers. Two students may not use the same computer unless the directions on the assignment sheet provided by the classroom teacher so indicate.
7. The lab is for computer use only. Students who sign in must have an educational objective requiring the use of a computer.
8. Frequently, there are mandatory assignments given for the Lab. Teachers allow ample time to complete these assignments; however, there may be limited access to programs. Students should plan accordingly.
9. Please help to keep the computer lab neat and orderly by placing used paper in recycle box and pushing in chairs at the end of the period.
10. In order to use computers and the Internet at school, a signed Acceptable Use Policy must be on file in the school office. See Acceptable Computer Use Policy in the Appendix.

ALL STUDENTS AND PARENTS MUST READ AND SIGN THE AGREEMENT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR USE OF THE MEDIA RESOURCES AT TAUNTON CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL (INCLUDING NETWORK AND INTERNET).

Conduct

Taunton Catholic Middle School encourages self-discipline and fosters an atmosphere in which Christian principals of behavior are expected. Students have the responsibility to participate fully in the serious business of learning. Students must report to school and to scheduled classes regularly and on time, remain in classes until excused, pay attention to instructors, complete assignments to the best of their ability and request help when it is needed. Students have the responsibility to avoid any behavior that could negatively affect their learning. Students must cooperate in maintaining orderliness in the school and in the classroom and take care of books and other instructional materials. Textbooks must be covered at all times. Students who fail to do so will be charged a replacement fee. Gum chewing is not allowed on school property. Students have the responsibility to show respect for their teachers and other persons. Students must not defy authority; to do so will only cause further disciplinary action. Students must use only acceptable and courteous language.

Students have the responsibility to recognize the rights and human dignity of fellow students. For example, students must refrain from name-calling, fighting, harassment, belittling, gossiping, threatening or engaging in deliberate attempts to embarrass or harm other students. Student behavior, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, will result in disciplinary action by the school.

Christian Behavior Will Be Modeled Throughout the School

Some offenses for school detention are as follows:

1. Disrespect
2. Foul language
3. Inappropriate behavior outside of the classroom
4. Habitual lateness
5. Destruction of school property
6. Failure to follow school rules
7. Destruction (School Wide)
8. Cheating
9. Forgery
10. Failure to return parent signature
11. Dress code/handbook violation
12. Failure to stay for teacher detention
13. Endangering student safety
14. Electronic device violation. All cell phones should be turned off and kept in student's locker.
15. Plagiarism

School Office Detention

School detention is held Monday - Thursday from 2 to 3 pm with 24-hour notice. A parent must sign detention slips. School detentions are to be served the day after they are issued unless a written excuse is received from the parent. If detention is excused, it is to be served the next day. Athletics, extra-curricular activities, clubs, etc., are not reasons for missing detention. Students owing a school detention are not eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities. For any student receiving five detentions or missing two days without being excused, parents will be contacted, and a day of in-house exclusion or suspension may result. Students receiving more than three detentions for a calendar month will not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activities during the following calendar month.

Teachers will be notifying parents/guardian of an office detention via email, voice mail or speaking with the parent or guardian in person.

Students receiving an in-house suspension may not participate in after school activities.

Teacher Detention

Classroom teachers can administer Teacher Detentions for reasons that include but are not limited to:

1. Incomplete homework – or assignments not done
2. Disrupting classroom instruction
3. Behavior directed specifically to the individual classroom teacher

Individual teachers should notify parents via email or phone that the student must stay for teacher detention, preferably the same day or the next afternoon. Teacher detentions are not reported to the office, but teachers maintain a record of such incidents and send a copy of the Teacher Detention in the next Friday Folder. During the detention, teachers discuss the behavior with the student involved in an attempt to resolve the situation and to build an atmosphere of understanding why this behavior is disruptive, etc.

Corridor Courtesy

To assist in maintaining good order and safety in halls, students must comply with the following guidelines:

1. Keep corridors open to traffic by staying to the right
2. Do not block traffic by standing in groups, thereby making it difficult for others to pass.
3. Pass through the corridors as quietly as possible.
4. Always be courteous and considerate of others in the halls and classrooms.
5. Behavior not consistent with civility and common courtesy is subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline Records

When a student transfers or graduates, discipline records will be provided to the new school system. "Said record shall include but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act."

Dismissal

Upon dismissal students should be on the bus, walking home, or attending a supervised activity. Once a student leaves school grounds, TCMS cannot be responsible and no student will be allowed to return to the school. Any student not in a supervised activity will be sent to ESP. Students will not be allowed to wait in hallways or outside the building. After 2:10 students are to be picked up at ESP. At the end of a supervised activity students will be brought to ESP to meet a parent/guardian or sign into ESP. This allows students to meet up with their rides easily. **(Charges for ESP will only occur if actually attending ESP; meeting a student at ESP does not incur charges.)** Students will be signed in 10 minutes after activity dismissal.

All students not attending a supervised activity are to be picked up at 2:00 pm. Any student who has not been picked up after school will be sent to ESP. For safety reasons, students are not allowed to wait outside unsupervised for a ride. Any student found wandering the grounds or the building and not participating in a supervised activity will be issued a detention.

Anyone picking up a student after 2:10 should ring the side door bell. ESP personnel will assist you to locate your child. They can then call the classroom to let them know you are here. At no time should the parents be going from classroom to classroom looking for a student.

Please note the front door will not be accessible after 2:15 for student pick up.

Early or Emergency Dismissal

If an early or emergency dismissal has been declared, you will be contacted with our School Reach program. You will receive a phone call at the number listed on the Primary contact form. To avoid any confusion, please listen carefully to any instructions issued in the recording.

Electronic Devices

Students should be discouraged from bringing items to school that would normally distract from the educational process. Music players of all types (including MP3, iPods), and all types of electronic communication devices (cell phones, iphones, iPads, etc) are not allowed during school hours or during ESP.

Cell phones are an important part of communication but not part of the education process. Cell phones must be turned off while on school grounds except for designated times and places. Absolutely no calls, texting, photography, video recording, or any other features may be used without permission.

The Main Office has been designated a *Cell Phone Zone*. Students may call parents before school, during their lunch, and after school with staff permission. Students may also use their phone before and after school **before** entering the school building.

If these items are used in school, the items will be confiscated, held in the office, and returned only to the parent or guardian. When a phone is confiscated, any text messages, pictures, or videos can be viewed by the principal or designee. Inappropriate messages, pictures or videos may result in administrative action up to and including expulsion. The student will also be issued an office detention for any unauthorized use. The school is not held responsible for any lost items. The school administration has the right to search anything brought on school property including student lockers.

Evacuation Policy

If the need for evacuation arises, the TCMS Staff will assist students in an orderly fashion to the Marian Manor parking lot.

Extended School Program (ESP)

Extended School Program (ESP) is a service offered by the School for the safety of your child; it is not a punishment. The Extended School Program makes it possible for parents to have their children in a safe environment after school. Please provide for your child's safety by seeing that they go home right after dismissal or sign in to ESP.

ESP is a pay-for-use service, at \$1.50 per ½ hour, which runs from 2:00-5:00 PM each day. All Students must be picked up by 5:00 PM or call the school and leave a message on the ESP phone. The ESP Phone number is **774-259-4348**, in case of emergency.

The daily schedule provides snack time, recreational, educational, and enrichment activities in a supervised environment. ESP gives students the opportunity to attend activities in the school's extra-curricular program, and parents the opportunity for convenient pick up. Any student on school property, after school dismissal, will be sent to the ESP program and payment for ESP will be required. Payment for services begins at 2:00 PM and charges are incurred by the half hour. Bills are issued as of the previous Friday date. Bills will be emailed on a weekly basis. Prompt payment is necessary to maintain the service.

You will be invoiced as follows: 2:00-3:00 1 hour, 2:00-4:00 2 hours, and 2:00-5:00 3 hours. Example: Pickup at 2:20 PM = ½ hour, 3:10 PM = 1 ½ hours. When sending in payments, if you "Overpay" for the week, your account is "Credited," your child will not receive money back. Students' parents will receive weekly statements via email if available. Paper copies will be supplied for those who do not have email.

When signing out your child, be certain to sign on the line matching your child's name. Also, make certain it is legible with your initials. Include the time you take your child. If you fail to include the pick up time, you will automatically be charged for three (3) hours.

Extra-Curricular Activities

A variety of programs are offered each year, which reflect our philosophy of educating the whole child. Eligibility for all extra-curricular activities is at the discretion of the school administration, in addition to any externally imposed requirements. Criteria for the selection to a team, prior to try-out, will hinge upon the following: Grades, Discipline Record and Attendance.

Art Club	Community Service	Soccer
Baseball	Cross Country	Softball
Basketball	Drama Club	Student Council
Campus Ministry	Music Club	Yearbook
Cheerleading	Peer Helpers	
Choir	Quiz Bowl	

Field Trips

Students may be excluded from field trips for reasons deemed appropriate by Administration. Students on trips are held to the same school rules that apply during regular classes. The official diocesan permission slip must be signed and returned in advance of the field trip. Phone calls and hand written notes cannot be accepted for field trips. All chaperones must have a CORI completed by the Diocese prior to the trip. Many CORI workshops are scheduled during the beginning of the year. Check your calendar.

Fire Drill

Regulations

Our goal is to achieve a very rapid and safe evacuation of the building. Fire drills are for your protection. The following regulations will be strictly enforced.

1. All staff and students must leave the building during drills.
2. Maintain absolute silence so that directions from fire officials and/or teachers may be clearly understood.
3. When outside, remain with your group and wait quietly for re-entrance according to the instructions of your teacher.

False Fire Alarm

Whoever without reasonable cause, by outcry or the ringing of bell, or otherwise makes or circulates or causes to be made or circulated a false alarm of fire shall be punished. Legal authorities may also be notified.

Forms

For your convenience, forms listed throughout the handbook maybe found in the back of this handbook or on the school's website.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of TCMS and may be inspected by the school Administration when reasonable information necessitates this action. Students must use the lockers, which have been assigned to them. Lockers are not to be shared with other students. The school assumes no responsibility for the loss of any items. Lockers must be kept neat and clean. No graffiti, pictures or posters or decorations of any kind will be attached lockers inside or outside lockers. Hats, coats and jackets must be kept in the lockers for the school day.

Due to safety reasons items may not be stored on the top of lockers. Any items left will be turned into the lost and found.

Students may go to their lockers at the beginning of the school day, end of the day, and with the permission of their teacher.

Lost And Found

Students are responsible for personal items, textbooks, notebooks, library books, etc. All valuable items (such as glasses, keys, wallets, etc) will be turned into the school's secretary. Students who have lost an item should check in the office.

Parents should insure that all items are labeled before being brought to school.

Medication Policy

When your child needs medicine to be given during the day, please act quickly to follow this medication policy so we may begin to give medicine as soon as possible. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that the following forms be on file in your child's health record before we can distribute any medicine at school.

1. Signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the specific medicine.
2. Signed medication order. The written medication order form should be taken to your child's licensed prescriber (your child's physician, nurse practitioner, etc.) for completion and return to the school. **This order must be renewed at the beginning of each academic year and as needed.** These forms are available in the office.

A parent or a responsible adult whom you designate must deliver medicines to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container. Ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of medicine should be delivered to the school. No student may have any medication, including over the counter products, unless this medication policy is followed. Over the counter medications not following the medication policy can only be administered by the parent.

Students not following this medication policy will be subject to the school's Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Policy.

In the absence of a School Nurse, all medications must be administered by a parent. Unqualified personnel will not be permitted to treat or otherwise diagnose, to dispense medications, take temperatures, or supervise treatment of your children.

Students must report all accidents, illnesses or injuries to the office immediately. Parents will be notified when necessary. When notified, parents must promptly make arrangements for the student to leave school. Parents must ensure that accurate health records are maintained.

National Junior Honor Society-NJHS

Taunton Catholic Middle School chapter of the National Junior Honor Society is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization. Membership is open to those students who meet the required standards in five areas of evaluation: scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character. Standards for selection are established by the national office of NJHS and have been revised to meet our local chapter needs. On behalf of the entire faculty, each April a five-member Faculty Council, appointed by the principal, select and bestow this honor upon qualified students.

Student in the second trimester of sixth grade or grades seven through eight are eligible for membership. For the scholarship criterion, a student must have a cumulative A- average or better. Those students who

meet this criterion are invited to complete a Student Activity Information Form that provides the Faculty Council with information regarding the candidate's leadership and service. A history of leadership experience and participation in school or community services is also required.

To evaluate a candidate's character, the Faculty Council uses two forms of reference. First, school disciplinary records are reviewed. Second, members of the faculty are solicited for input regarding their professional reflections on a candidate's service activities, character, citizenship, and leadership. The Faculty Council carefully reviews these forms along with the Student Activity Information Forms to determine membership. A majority vote of the Council is necessary for selection. Candidates are notified regarding selection or non-selection according to a predetermined schedule.

Following notification, a formal induction ceremony is held at the school to recognize all the newly selected members. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance (or better) in all five criteria that led to their selection. This obligation includes regular attendance at chapter meetings held during the school year and participation in the chapter service projects.

Scholarship

The scholarship requirement set by the National Council is based on a student's cumulative grades. A cumulative grade refers to the total academic performance as demonstrated by the grades received by the student while in attendance at the school where the chapter is found. Students must have a cumulative A-grade or better.

Leadership

The leadership criterion is considered highly important for membership selection. It is important to recognize that leadership also exists outside elected position including effective participation in positions of responsibility in other activities offered on campus such as athletic team captains, section leaders in band and chorus, committee chairs in student groups, etc. Leadership roles in both the school and community may be considered, provided they can be verified.

The student who exercises leadership:

- Is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions
- Demonstrates initiative in promoting school activities
- Exercises positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals and spirit
- Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
- Is able to delegate responsibilities
- Exemplifies positive attitudes
- Inspires positive behavior in others
- Demonstrates academic initiative
- Successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility
- Conducts business effectively and efficiently
- Demonstrates reliability and dependability
- Is a leader in the classroom, at work, or in other school or community activities
- Is dependable in any responsible accepted.

Service

Service is generally considered to be those actions undertaken by the student which are done with or on behalf of others without any direct financial or material compensation. In considering service, the contributions a candidate has made to school, classmates, and community as well as the student's attitude toward service can be reviewed.

The student who serves:

- Volunteers and provides dependable and well-organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance
- Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
- Cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school.
- Is willing to represent the class or school in interclass and interscholastic competition
- Does committee and staff work without complaint
- Participates in some activity outside of school (e.g., Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, religious groups, volunteer services for the elderly, poor, or disadvantaged).
- Mentors persons in the community or students at other schools
- Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and students.

Citizenship

The student who demonstrates citizenship:

- Understands the importance of civic involvement
- Has a high regard for freedom and justice; respects the U.S. form of government (representative democracy); and respects the laws at the state, and federal level that protect that government
- Demonstrates mature participation and responsibility through involvement with such activities as scouting, community organizations, and school clubs.

Character

Chapters can consider the following descriptions as they develop their local definition and standard for character. This list is for consideration purposes only and should not be thought of as a checklist for this criterion.

The student of character:

- Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (e.g., cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
- Cooperates with complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, office, halls, etc.
- Demonstrates the highest standards of honest and reliability
- Regularly shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others
- Observes instructions and rules, is punctual, and faithful both inside and outside the classroom
- Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing a unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
- Actively helps rid the school of bad influences or environment.

Photographs and Videos

The school administration may place student photos, information and/or videos on the school's web site or use the same in publications unless parent/guardian notifies the school in writing that they do not give permission. The school administration does not allow the use of the school logo and/or other similar items without the permission of the principal. No one may use a photo or video of any student or staff without the permission of the principal.

Retreats

Opportunities for prayer and reflection are essential to a balanced Religious Education program. All students are expected to attend at least one school-sponsored retreat by the end of the school year.

Scholarships

Presently, there are two scholarships available at TCMS. The criteria for each are listed below:

Joseph Murphy Memorial Scholarship: Is an academic scholarship given each year to the eighth grade student with the highest average for their years at TCMS. This scholarship is a gift from the members of the School Advisory Council.

The John and Michael Butler Memorial Scholarship: Is given annually to one girl and one boy for their eighth grade year at TCMS. Financial need is the first consideration and single parent families are given preference. Students must be in good academic standing and a good citizen of TCMS.

School Calendar

See Appendix and/or website
www.catholicmiddle.com

School Closings

TCMS is closed when Taunton Public Schools are closed for reasons of inclement weather or state of emergency. Your Primary Number will also be contacted via our School Reach program.

Announcements are made over the following TV stations: Channel 4, 5, 6, 7, and 12. Also, listen to these radio stations: WRKO 680 AM, WHDH 850 AM, WHJJ 920 AM, WBZ 10:30 AM, WNBH 1340 AM, WPEP 1570 AM, WLNE 88 FM, WBUR 90.9 FM, WSNE 93.3 FM, WCTK 98.1 FM, WBMX 98.5 FM. .

To avoid confusion and maintain student safety during dismissal, please listen carefully to directions given through our School Reach program.

Students who walk or are in car pools should be made aware of their contingency plans, by you, the parent, as to how they should proceed in such situations. There will be no ESP on these days. We are not able to accommodate large numbers of students calling home. However, students are able to use their cell phone or the student phone.

Summer Reading

Every student is required to read the One Book chosen for the Summer Reading. Students are also required to complete the online One Book Activities found on the school website www.catholicmiddle.com. In addition, students are required to complete the Academic Summer Review packets for English Language Arts and Mathematics. Students entering Grade 8 are also required to complete online reviews in Mathematics and Social Studies, in addition to English Language Arts. These activities will become part of the First Trimester grades in those subjects.

Telephone

Students are discouraged from using the telephone; however, when the need arises due to schedule changes, the office has a phone available for student use before school, at lunch and after school.

Students should not be calling home to request lunch, lunch money, class assignments, gym clothes, or to go to a friend's/relative's home after school. We try to stress the importance of responsibility, and we appreciate your cooperation in assisting us toward that goal. All arrangements should be made for transportation, lunch, homework, etc. before the child enters the school building. Cell phones are only to be used in the office with the permission of staff. For safety reasons students are not allowed to use cell phones in the restrooms for any reason. If a student does not feel well, they should go to the nurses' office.

Students are not permitted to accept any incoming phone calls. A message may be left in the event of a family emergency, and the student will be paged at the end of the day to pick up the message. Any student whose transportation is delayed will be sent to ESP.

Transportation

Parents should drop off/pick up their son/daughter on Summer Street. For safety reasons, vehicles are **not** allowed in the school driveway between 1:30 and 2:00 PM. Parents with scheduled appointments with administrators or teachers will be allowed to park in the spaces provided. Any child with limited mobility may be dropped off in the designated parking spaces.

Those who ride buses should consider it a privilege and must act according to the rules and regulations of the public school policy. Repeated failure to do so will result in denial of the bus privilege. ***Coyle-Cassidy High School runs private pay buses to the Middleboro/Lakeville, Carver/Plymouth, and Easton/Brockton/Stoughton Areas. For information call the Coyle-Cassidy Office at 508-823-6164 or 508-823-6165.***

Walkers are to leave the school grounds immediately following dismissal from school or supervised school activities by the front walkway. Once a student leaves school grounds TCMS cannot be responsible, and they will not be allowed to return to the building.

Students must present written notification from a parent to the homeroom teacher if there is to be any deviation from normal routine dismissal procedures.

Tuition

Payments

All fees and tuition for the new school year are announced in April.

Tuition may be paid either by:

- a. Full Payment by May 1st for the upcoming school year, or
- b. using eCashier complete a FACTS application for monthly deductions of automatic payments of either 10 months or 11 months.
- c. under special circumstances, additional payment schedules are available with individual consultation with administration.

Delinquent Accounts

The Administration reserves the right to withhold the final exams or report cards from students whose accounts are delinquent. All students with payment in arrears may be subject to exclusion from selected activities.

Financial Aid

Parish Subsidy

Parish Subsidy form is available in the School Office. They are sent home at the parents' request in February, and are due back in the school office with the Pastor's signature by the end of February for the following school year. **You must apply each year for this assistance.**

St. Mary's Scholarship Fund

Parents are issued the St. Mary's Scholarship Fund Application upon request. Parents submit directly to FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment in Lincoln, Nebraska all personal financial information to support their application. FACTS coordinates and forwards all information to the Chancery Office, in Fall River. TCMS is then issued a list of recipients and amounts awarded from the Diocesan Development Office. **You must apply each year.**

Uniform Policy

Girls —Wear a plaid uniform skirt *at or below the knee* and a white, pointed collar uniform blouse, buttoned to the top or solid, gray (light/medium), straight-legged, dress pants, (no extra zippers, pockets, or seams), and a black belt. A School Uniform Company, maroon crew neck, sweater or a sweater vest, with the school initials completes the uniform. Students can choose to wear black, white, maroon, or gray knee socks or tights. From December 1, to April 1st, white turtlenecks may be worn under the blouse. Make-up, nail polish, and excessive jewelry are not part of the uniform. For example, only one pair of earrings may be worn, and they may not go below the lobe.

Boys — Wear solid, gray (light/medium), straight-legged, dress pants, (no extra zippers, pockets, or seams), and a black belt. A white, buttoned down collar, oxford shirt and a uniform plaid tie (shirts must be buttoned and the tie under the sweater). A School Uniform Company, maroon V-neck pullover sweater or sweater vest, with the school initials completes the uniform. Students can choose to wear black, white, or gray **crew-length** socks. Only **white tee-shirts** should be worn under the uniform. Earrings are not part of the boy's uniform and may not be worn.

Boys must be clean shaven (no beards or mustaches) neatly groomed hair (cut above the eyebrows and the ears, not to touch the collar in the back), moderate sideburns (no longer than the middle of the ear.) Students who are not clean-shaven or hair exceeds the acceptable length will be sent home to comply with the regulations.

All Students: Warm Weather Option: A maroon, three button, polo shirt (only the top button may be unbuttoned) with TCMS embroidered on it may be worn only during September, October, May, and June. This maroon shirt replaces the blouse/sweater of the girl's uniforms and the shirt/tie/sweater of the boy's uniform. Since this is a warm weather option, it may not be worn with the sweater. If it is too cold for a polo shirt the winter uniform should be worn. Jackets and sweatshirts are not allowed to be worn with a polo shirt. The polo shirt is worn with the skirt or pants and must be tucked in. Uniforms are supplied by Donnelly's and their telephone number is 1-800-498-0045.

In all cases and at all times, any garment acceptable under the dress code must be neat, clean and in good repair. Students may not display any symbol on their person or property deemed by the administration to be offensive to any member of the community. A dress code violation may result in a student having to modify his/her dress. Students unable to modify their appearance will be issued a TCMS uniform for the day. Temporary uniforms should be cleaned and returned the next day.

If for some extraordinary reason a student is unable to observe the dress code, he/she must present a note from parent/guardian (before school) explaining why the dress code may not be observed. Parents and students must realize, however, that jeans, tee shirt, casual/sport clothing are not considered appropriate school dress in these extraordinary circumstances. Therefore, boys must wear dress pants, shirt and tie. Girls must wear a modest length dress or an appropriate skirt and blouse. An appointment is not an acceptable reason to be out of dress code. Also, any modifications for medical reasons must follow the dress code as closely as possible and prior approval should be requested. When a person is out of dress code for these extraordinary reasons, other aspects of the dress code apply.

Gym: Students must wear appropriate attire for gym class. This includes a shirt (not sleeveless), shorts (to the end of the fingertips) or sweatpants, socks and sneakers. With the exception of shorts, students are not allowed to wear any items prohibited by the Dress Down Day Policy in physical education classes.

Shoes:

For boys and girls the only acceptable shoes are black soled, penny loafer, tie buck or camp moccasin. Girls may also choose to wear sturdy, Mary Jane shoes; they must be black with a thick black sole. Shoes are to be properly tied at all times. No lug soles, flats or flip flops are allowed.

Hairstyles: Unusual hairstyles are not allowed. These include, but are not limited to Mohawks, lines, colors, excessively long, excessively teased, or hair that covers the eyes.

Dress Down Days: On these days, jeans may be worn; however, students are expected to demonstrate good taste and common sense out of respect and consideration for members of the entire community. Ripped, torn or patched jeans are unacceptable. Students must comply with all regulations announced for these special days. Students, who in the opinion of the school administration are inappropriately dressed, will be subject to modification and/or disciplinary action. A dress code violation may result in a student having to modify his/her dress. Students unable to modify their appearance will be issued a TCMS uniform for the day. Temporary uniforms should be cleaned and returned the next day.

Makeup and excessive jewelry are not permitted as they distract from the learning environment. For safety reasons, no platform, high heel or slide on shoes (such as flip flops) may be worn.

The Administration reserves the right to decide if any clothing is inappropriate for school.

ANY SITUATIONS, WHICH ARE NOT ADDRESSED IN THIS HANDBOOK, WILL BE HANDLED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION.

Appendices

Snow Day ~ Dismissal ~ Starting Delay

Calendar

Field Trip Permission Slip
(This form may be copied if needed.)

Meal Ticket Form
(Copy this form as needed or a printable form is available online)

ESP Brochure

ESP Movie Permission Slip
(Movie list can be found online)

Forms to Return to Homeroom Teachers

Acceptable Computer Use Policy
Handbook Agreement
Nurse Medical Cards
Emergency Change Form
Signature Cards



TAUNTON CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

61 Summer Street
Taunton, MA 02780
508.822.0491
www.catholicmiddle.com

Snow Day ~ Early Dismissal ~ Delayed Opening

In the case of a snow day, delayed opening or early dismissal due to inclement weather, you will be contacted via our School Reach program. We follow the Taunton Public School System. When there is no school in the Taunton Public Schools, there is no school at Taunton Catholic Middle School. If a delayed opening is announced, the time for school to open will be delayed. The dismissal time will remain the same. Delayed openings may range from 60 to 120 minutes in length.

Early dismissal can cause confusion if prior contingency plans have not been finalized and reviewed when inclement weather is predicted. Walkers and carpools will be dismissed at the same time.

Please, do not call the school asking if or when school will be dismissed due to inclement weather. We need to keep the telephone lines open during this time for emergencies. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

~~School Reach will be the primary contact system~~

Television and Radio Stations
Announcing Inclement Weather Closures

Post on your refrigerator



TV: Ch. 4, 5, 6, 7, 12 WRKO 680 AM WHDH 850 AM WHJJ 920 AM

WBZ 1030 AM WNBH 1340 AM WPEP 1570 AM WLNE 88FM

WBUR 90.0 FM WSNE 93.3 FM WCTK 98.1 WBMX 98.5 FM



Phone: 508.822.0491

www.catholicmiddle.com
e-mail: tcms@catholicmiddle.com

Fax: 508.824.0469

Handbook Agreement School Year 2011 - 2012

All signatures indicate your understanding of the school rules and policies.

Please sign and return this page to the school office

Student Name: _____
(Please Print)

Student Homeroom: _____

Signature of Student: _____

Parent Name: _____
(Please Print)

Signature of Parent: _____

Date: _____