

WELCOME TO THE 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Once again, welcome to the families of our new and returning students. Each year starts a fresh journey for us all and the excitement that comes with all new beginnings, especially the opportunities to learn and develop together.

Our students continue to learn within a theme-based functional skills curriculum, by participating in community-based outings, through career-based training opportunities, and participation in Best Buddies and Special Olympics. Our classrooms, teaching kitchens, the gym, hydrotherapy pool, village green, art, music, assistive technology and therapy studios all provide special venues for teaching and learning. As we eagerly begin our fourth year in this magnificent facility, many of you will notice a colorful new teaching venue added to the school; a fully accessible playground with was introduced to our students and families at an exciting ribbon cutting ceremony in April.

We remain ever grateful for your continued support and trust as we serve both your children and you in an environment filled with teachable moments.

Sharon Raimo
Chief Executive Officer

Janice Corazza
Principal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

School Calendar	3
Important Phone Numbers.....	4
ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.....	5
Tell me about St. Coletta	5
What is the history of St. Coletta?	5
How is a child admitted to St. Coletta?	5
What are the facilities like and what special equipment is available?	6
What does a typical classroom look like?	6
What is the tuition at St. Coletta? Are there any other fees I'll need to pay?	6
What services does St. Coletta offer?	6
How is my child's IEP developed and who participates at the meeting?.....	7
How is my local school jurisdiction involved in my child's education?.....	7
How do we know how our child is progressing? Will my child receive grades?	7
Will my child have to participate in Statewide testing?	7
If I am dissatisfied with some part of my child's program what recourse do I have? .	7
What will my child receive when he or she graduates?	8
How is the St. Coletta program structured?.....	8
How will I know what is going on in my child's classroom?.....	8
What else is provided?	8
How is my child transported to school and community-based instruction outings? ...	8
What is the length of the school day?.....	9
Do you offer before and after school care?	9
What are the policies regarding attendance?	9
What are the policies regarding truancy?.....	9
Can I take my child out of school for a vacation?.....	10
Does my child need a physical exam before he or she can attend school?	10
What happens in the event of inclement weather?.....	10
My child takes medication. How are medications administered?.....	10
Are meals provided?	10
How is student behavior managed?.....	10
What is St. Coletta policy on student suspension?.....	12
My child has difficult behaviors. Can he or she be terminated because of them?...	12
What is the school's weapons/drug policy?.....	12
Does the school have an emergency preparedness plan?.....	12
Why can't I send my child to school when he is sick?.....	13
Can teachers help me with child care at home?.....	13
Who is allowed to see my child's records?	13
What about photographs?	13
What is the school's policy on cell phones?.....	13
Can I learn about the qualifications of my child's teacher? ..	14
What is the State Education Agency Complaint Resolution Policy.....	14
Is there a dress code?.....	14
Will my child go on school-based outings?.....	14
How is the school run and funded?.....	14
More questions?.....	15

ST. COLETTA OF GREATER WASHINGTON

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SCHOOL CALENDAR 2009-2010

Revised: 2/18/09

Monday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm / Tuesday through Friday 8:30 am - 3:00 pm
Day care available Mondays 12:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Mon - Tues	Aug 3 – Aug 14, 2009	Summer Break – <i>School Closed</i>
Mon – Wed	Aug 17 – Aug 26, 2009	Orientation and Professional Development for new staff
Mon - Wed	Aug 24– Aug 26, 2009	Orientation and Professional Development for returning staff
Wednesday	August 26, 2009	Open House 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Thursday	August 27, 2009	First Day of School - Students return to School
Monday	September 7, 2009	Labor Day Holiday – <i>School Closed</i>
Tuesday	September 22, 2009	Back to School Night 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday	September 23, 2009	Staff Professional Day – <i>School Closed for Students</i>
Monday	October 12, 2009	Columbus Day Holiday – <i>School Closed</i>
Wednesday	October 21, 2009	Staff Professional Day -- <i>School Closed for Students</i>
Wednesday	November 11, 2009	Staff Professional Day – <i>School Closed for Students</i>
Friday	November 13, 2009	First Quarterly Progress Reports Go Home
Wednesday	November 25, 2009	Half Day – 12:30 pm dismissal – <i>No Day Care</i>
Thurs – Fri	November 26-27, 2009	Thanksgiving Holiday – <i>School Closed</i>
Mon – Tues	December 21 – 22, 2009	Snow Make-up Days - (<i>If Needed</i>)
Wed - Fri	Dec 23 – Jan 1, 2010	Winter Break – <i>School Closed</i>
Monday	January 4, 2010	Students Return to School
Monday	January 18, 2010	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday -- <i>School Closed</i>
Wednesday	January 27, 2010	Staff Professional Day – <i>School Closed for Students</i>
Friday	February 12, 2010	Second Quarterly Progress Reports Go Home (2/15 – 2/26/10 – <i>Parent/Teacher Conferences Scheduled</i>)
Monday	February 15, 2010	Presidents’ Day Holiday – <i>School Closed</i>
Wednesday	February 24, 2010	Staff Professional Day -- <i>School Closed for Students</i>
Mon - Mon	Mar 29 – Apr 5, 2010	Spring Break -- <i>School Closed</i>
Wednesday	April 21, 2010	Staff Professional Day – <i>School Closed for Students</i>
Friday	May 7, 2010	Third Quarterly Progress Reports Go Home
Wednesday	May 19, 2010	Staff Professional Day – <i>School Closed for Students</i>
Friday	May 28, 2010	Half -Day -- 12:30 pm dismissal -- <i>No Day Care</i>
Monday	May 31, 2010	Memorial Day Holiday -- <i>School Closed</i>
Wednesday	June 23, 2010	Staff Professional Day – <i>School Closed for Students</i>
Monday	July 5, 2010	July 4 th Holiday – <i>School Closed</i>
Wednesday	July 28, 2010	Fourth Quarterly Progress Reports Go Home
Thursday	July 29, 2010	Last Day of School for Students – 12:30 pm dismissal – <i>No Day Care</i>
Friday	July 30, 2010	Staff Day – Clean-up

THE PEOPLE OF ST. COLETTA OF GREATER WASHINGTON
202-350-8680

President, Saint Coletta Board of Trustees	David Pryor (ext. 1001)
Chairperson, Saint Coletta Special Education Public Charter School Board of Trustees	Anne Gay (ext. 1001)
Chief Executive Officer	Sharon B. Raimo (ext. 1001)
Principal	Janice Corazza (ext. 1003)
Assistant Principal	Christie Mandeville (ext. 1031)
Assistant Principal	Katherine Chandler (ext. 1039)
Director, Finance/Controller	Kathy Rowland (ext. 1001)
Director, Operations	Sandi Marra (ext. 1001)
Director, Development	Rebecca Hill (ext. 1001)
Director of Therapeutic Services	Grace Scarfi (ext. 1038)
Director of Curriculum and Instruction	Naikia Lewis (ext. 1016)
Director of Admissions	Donna O'Meara (ext. 1002)
Autism Resource Specialist	Ann Marie Nataro (ext. 1059)
IEP Assessment Coordinator	David Knight (ext. 1004)
Teachers House 1 (ext. 1012)	Justin Lien (Manager), Jillian Banigan, Amy Wingo, Kelsey Bird, Patrice King, Kristine Adams
House 2 (ext. 1017)	Ann Strube (Manager), Dennis Garcia, Nicole Sirkot, Kristina Russo, Amanda Parks
House 3 (ext. 1020)	Amy Sellers (Manager), Tonia Collins, Iquo Jones, Simmon Kim, Laura Picardi, Olga Chernomorets-Kinder
House 4 (ext. 1075)	Courtney Montony (Manager), Immaculate Masamba, Shannon Burke, Wanji Kuria, Jill Pesansky, Effie Dixon
House 5 (ext. 1079)	Heather Lindsey, Kristine Rigley , Catherine Decker, Candice Pettus, Karl Schumann
Vocational Coordinator (ext. 1074)	Natalie Gibson
Adapted Physical Education Teacher (ext. 1009)	Heather Johnson, Ryan Toland
Music Therapist (ext. 1058)	Bonni Ampela
Art Specialist (ext. 1072)	Daniel Foley
Assistive Technology Specialists (ext. 1071)	Kara Moyer
Occupational Therapists (ext. 1073)	Jenny Evans (Supervisor), Gosia Grzybowska, Kristin Gottsacker, Sarah Newby, Mercedes Anderson, Jennifer Norman, Loni Licuanan
Physical Therapists (ext. 1025)	Andrea Ribando (Supervisor), Katherine Labuda, Joyce Manning Glynette Livingstone-Isom, Lindsey Cox
Speech/Language Pathologists (ext. 1073)	Patricia Walker (Supervisor), Megan Christie, Christine Raymond, Carlene Reid, Joy Scott, Stephanie Ricke, Shoshana Dickler, Julia Tannebaum
Behavior Specialists/Staff (ext..1059)	Ester Pline, Fiorella Santos
Counselors (1078)	Katrice Ashton (Supervisor), Carla Galone, Debra Francis-Thomas
Nurses (ext. 1022)	Robert Allen, Norma Fuentes
Senior Accountant (ext. 1033)	Paulette Williams
Human Resources Manager (ext. 1010)	Kaiheem Mason
Recruitment (ext. 1080)	Kendra Hardy
IT Director (ext. 1040)	Brian Mandeville
IT Developer (ext. 1051)	Michael Quill
Facilities Manager	Jamar Surratt
Facilities Assistants	Will Cooper-Balis, Joseph Balzano
Administrative Assistants	Shirlisa Echols, Aisha Berkeley
Attendance Manager (ext. 1005)	Judyvette Acevedo
Records Manager (ext. 1015)	Kendra Frazier
Transportation Coordinator (ext.1024)	Shandell Matthews

IMPORTANT CURRENT PHONE NUMBERS

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

D.C. Transportation	202-576-6171
Alexandria City Transportation	703-461-4169
Charles County	301-934-7264
Montgomery Cty. Transportation.	301-670-2283
Prince George's Cty. Transportation.	301-952-6572/6579
Yellow Cab (Fairfax Cty. Students).	703-451-2255

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Here are some questions that have been raised by other parents over the years. We think you will find the answers helpful. Of course, your own questions are always welcome as we work together to serve your child.

Tell me about the school my child is now attending.

St. Coletta of Greater Washington is an independent, non-sectarian, not for profit organization serving children and young adults with mental retardation, autism and secondary disabilities. At St. Coletta, each person is recognized for personal strengths rather than by needs and is evaluated by their potential rather than by our expectations. Our goal is to give individuals with mental retardation and autism every chance to show the world what they can do.

The mission of St. Coletta of Greater Washington is to serve children and adults with cognitive disabilities and to support their families. At St. Coletta, we believe in the immeasurable value of the human spirit and in the right of each individual to live as full and independent a life as possible. We respect the dignity of all persons entrusted to our care and our goal is to serve them in an atmosphere that encourages their talents, celebrates their successes and builds their self-esteem.

At St. Coletta, the focus is on the individual and what they need to learn in order to be successful in school and in the wider community. We believe that individuals learn best through hands-on, exploratory experiences. Teachers and therapists plan an integrated theme-based approach and develop a series of learning experiences that allow children to explore a subject while working on skills and competencies spelled out in their IEP (Individualized Education Program). The basic program includes: functional academics, skills of daily living, community-based instruction, adaptive physical education, arts education, computer skills and vocational training.

What is the history of St. Coletta School?

St. Coletta was founded in 1959, in Arlington, Virginia, by Joe and Hazel Hagarty. Their daughter had Down Syndrome, and they were not satisfied with programs offered by the local public schools and were unwilling to send their daughter to an institution. Before acquiring the new DC site, the school occupied space at St. Coletta School on Peyton Street in Alexandria, St. Charles School in the Clarendon Presbyterian Church, and at Marymount University.

How is a child admitted to St. Coletta School?

Children are referred to the school by their local public school jurisdiction, educational advocates, or attorneys. The criteria for admission is cognitive delay which can be coupled with additional disabilities such as autism, orthopedic impairments, health impairments, vision and hearing impairments, and/or speech language impairments. A decision to accept a child is based on the ability of the school to offer an appropriate placement, as well as on space available at a child's age level. This decision is made after a record review and a personal interview. If you live in the District of Columbia, you can apply for admission by sending a completed application to the admissions office. Students from jurisdictions other than the District of Columbia should include: a current IEP, the most recent psycho-educational evaluation, and any speech/language, occupational, physical or medical evaluations that are available.

What are the facilities like and what special equipment is available?

St. Coletta School is located in a beautiful, state-of-the-art facility, which occupies 99,000 square feet at 19th Street and Independence Avenue, SE, in the District. There are computers available in every classroom, as well as a technology lab. Assistive technology and adaptive devices are available to all students with a need for such devices. There are studios for art, music, physical therapy, and horticulture. A sensory room and hydrotherapy pool are available as per student need. A full-sized gymnasium is available for students. In addition, kitchen facilities are included in each house.

What does a typical classroom look like?

At St. Coletta, a typical classroom consists of 10-15 students, a teacher, teacher's assistant and individual assistants. Often these assistants may act as individual attendants for particular students.

What is the tuition at St. Coletta? Are there any other fees I'll need to pay?

All students at St. Coletta are publicly funded. Periodically, the school may request money for special activities; however, no student is ever denied an opportunity to participate in an activity due to lack of funds.

What services does St. Coletta School offer?

The program of services is developed, and is always evolving, as an extension of the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) for each student. The program is planned with a vision that St. Coletta graduates are happy, productive individuals living as independently as possible.

BASIC PROGRAM

The goal of the Basic Program is to help students achieve their Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, increase their independence, utilize their community, express themselves in a variety of ways, promote their health and well-being, and encourage their peer relationships. The Basic Program can include:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Functional Academics | Daily Living Skills | Behavior Support Services |
| Community-Based Instruction | Adaptive Physical Education | Swimming |
| Computer/Keyboard Skills | Music and Art Therapy | Hydrotherapy |

SPEECH/LANGUAGE THERAPY

Speech/language therapy is available to the students as required by their IEPs. This service is included in the St. Coletta tuition. The goal is to provide each student with a functional system of communication using speech, sign, picture symbols, assistive devices, or a combination of these so that the student can express his or her feelings, wants, and needs.

OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPIES

Occupational and/or physical therapy is available to students whose IEPs indicate a need for these services. Physical therapy requires a doctor's prescription. The therapist will work with the classroom teachers, the PE teacher and the vocational staff on a regular basis. The goal of physical therapy is to improve gross motor skills, balance, and range of motion, and to help the student achieve as much independent movement in the educational environment as possible. The goal of occupational therapy is to improve fine motor and hand eye coordination so that the student is better able to perform the tasks of daily living, hands on classroom projects, and eventually vocational skills.

PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING

Students who require psychological counseling may receive these services at St. Coletta School. The goal is to help students improve their social interaction and to give support to the families in understanding and working effectively with their special child.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) regulations require that all persons with disabilities age sixteen and older receive transitional and vocational services. To this end, St. Coletta provides Pre-Vocational Skills, Career-Based Preparation Training, and Supported Employment. The goal of the career-based program is to help students learn about the world of work and provide them with the skills and support to make a successful transition to employment as appropriate. In order to provide guidance and instruction, any of the following may accompany students into the community: teachers, therapists, and paraprofessionals (job coaches and teacher assistants). In addition, if a student has a dedicated aide, an aide will accompany them into the community.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

St. Coletta believes that each student has the right to avail themselves of anything that may remove a barrier to learning. Toward this end, the staff will help with the selection of and training on any appropriate assistive learning device. This may include adaptive equipment, hearing aids, an augmentative communication device, or a computer program or adaptation.

How is my child's IEP developed and who participates at the meeting?

If a child comes with a valid IEP, an IEP review is held; then at a minimum annually thereafter. We expect the LEA representative, the parent or guardian, the teachers and therapists to be active participants in the scheduling and development of the IEP.

Besides participating at the IEP, how will my local school jurisdiction be involved in my child's education?

The administration of St. Coletta keeps in close contact with the school jurisdictions responsible for placing students here. It is our goal to work as a team in providing the best possible services for our students. St. Coletta staff members inform the jurisdictions of progress and of incidents or other matters of concern involving publicly placed students.

How do we know how our child is progressing? Will my child receive grades?

Progress is noted on the IEP goals four times per year, as well as during IEP meetings which at a minimum must be held annually. Mid-year progress reviews will also be held. These progress reports are sent home to parents and guardians. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make appointments at any time of the year to review their child's progress. Daily communication books are also utilized for ongoing dialogue between parent/guardian and school. St. Coletta does not use a traditional grading system. Portfolios are kept on each student to document progress and plan for the future.

Will my child have to participate in the Statewide testing initiatives?

St. Coletta students are generally exempt from Statewide standardized testing due to their disabilities; however, decisions regarding assessment are part of the IEP process. Students participate at designated intervals during their educational years in the portfolio assessment process. Each jurisdiction determines the schedule, as well as the format for the portfolio assessment. Re-evaluation meetings are held once every three years by the IEP team to determine whether further individualized testing is indicated. Testing can be scheduled by parent request.

If I am dissatisfied with some part of my child's program what recourse do I have?

The Multidisciplinary Team is the last resort in resolving individual programmatic issues. A parent or guardian can ask for a meeting of the Multidisciplinary Team to discuss the child's program at any time during the school year. If the parent or guardian does not agree with the recommendations of the team, the parent can initiate their due process rights and/or the LEA can recommend a change in placement.

What will my child receive when he or she graduates from St. Coletta?

A student is deemed ready to graduate from St. Coletta when he or she has successfully transitioned into the world of employment, or at the end of the semester or year in which he or she turns twenty-one or twenty-two depending upon the jurisdiction. Families work with appropriate adult agencies from their respective jurisdictions to aid the transition process and/or identify appropriate programming and support for employment after graduation. Graduating students receive a certificate of IEP completion at a special graduation ceremony.

How is the St. Coletta program structured?

The St. Coletta program is structured by age level. Each age level is a designated house ; for example House 1 is generally ages 3-8; House 2, 9-12; House 3, 13-15 and Houses 4 and 5, 16 and older. The upper ages of each designated age level may vary slightly depending on the individual needs of the students. Your child will be assigned a classroom and teacher. Your primary contact is your teacher; however, for any needs you may have, each house has a House Manager who is your administrative point of contact.

How will I know what is going on in my child's classroom?

Each student will be given a Communication Book on the first day of school which will go from school to home and back each day. The book provides a means of communication between parents/guardians and teachers. Parents and guardians are asked to read the book daily and either initial the latest entry or enter a comment. The Communication Book is an invaluable aid to the home-school partnership. The books will be collected at the end of the school year and will become part of the student's anecdotal record. In addition, parents receive monthly newsletters informing them of House Activities.

The school welcomes parent/guardian visits. However, to insure the safety and well-being of our students we must know who is in the building at all times. All daily visitors must report to the office and sign-in before going any other place in the building. If your child forgets something at home, please bring it to the office and we shall be responsible for getting the item to the student. If you are picking up your child during the school day for an appointment, you must sign your child out when you arrive to pick them up from school and inform the office and your child's teacher. If you bring your child to school after school has begun, you must sign your child in at the front office.

What else is provided?

Interested students, 8 years and older, may participate in Special Olympics, a very rewarding and enriching experience. Special Olympics provides opportunities for peer social interaction and exposure to life-long leisure and fitness pursuits.

Community-based instructional activities include frequent trips to area parks, swimming, libraries, restaurants and other community resources. Generally, community-based instruction is tied directly to the theme or lessons addressed within the classroom.

How is my child transported to school and on community-based instruction outings?

Children are transported to and from school by their local public school jurisdiction. Transportation is a related service and must be provided in accordance with the child's IEP. Problems with transportation should be referred to the local jurisdiction as well as to the school office. The school owns five passenger vans that are used to transport students. Only employees on the insurance policy for these vans may drive them. If the vans are full, teachers sometimes drive students in their own vehicles. For school-wide trips, St. Coletta usually hires buses. Staff and students frequently utilize the metro and bus systems. Permission slips for community-based instruction will specify travel arrangements and modes of transportation.

What is the length of the school day?

School will be in session from 8:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m., except for each Monday when school is dismissed at 12:30 p.m. to allow for staff work and development time.

Do you offer before and after school care?

There is no before school and after school care available. On Mondays, day care is available from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.. However, since most school jurisdictions will not provide transportation, private arrangements must be made by the student's parent or guardian.

What are the policies regarding attendance?

It is required that parents/guardians call the school if their child is absent. You can report your child's absence by dialing the school number (202) 350-8680 and accessing the student absence extension #1101. The teachers take attendance each and every day and the homes of absent students are called by office personnel if a parent/guardian does not report their child's absence. The reason for each absence or tardiness is documented. Excessive absence and tardiness is a cause for concern. Lawful reasons for absences and tardiness include: illness of a student (a doctor's note may be required); death in the student's immediate family; medical appointments; required court appearances; observance of religious holy days; lawful exclusion or expulsion from school by school authorities; temporary closing of school; and other absences approved in advance by the principal upon the written request of a parent or guardian. If no information is received from the parent/guardian regarding the student's absence, it is marked as unexcused.

What are the policies regarding truancy?

St. Coletta must follow the attendance policies of the governing jurisdiction/school district. The school is required by law to report truancy for children under age 16/18 (depending on jurisdiction). Generally, if a student accumulates an "excessive" amount of unexcused absences as determined by the jurisdiction, St. Coletta must hold an attendance conference, may need to make a referral to the appropriate child and family services agency, and refer students/parents to the appropriate court for intervention to ensure student attendance. In this situation, every effort will be made to contact the parents and/or guardians of a St. Coletta student in order to work out a plan for regular attendance. When a student has accumulated five or more days of unexcused absences, depending on the jurisdiction, a conference will be held for such purposes as to review educational and attendance concerns, develop attendance intervention strategies, and identify local community resources to abate truancy and improve school attendance. Again depending on the jurisdiction, if a student continues to demonstrate a pattern of unexcused absences, unabated by school intervention, in excess of ten days, St. Coletta can refer the student to the local child protective services or child and family services agency for suspected educational neglect. If unexcused absences continue to accumulate and are in excess of fifteen days, the school district may choose to file a petition of truancy and court intervention. For your child's school district's policies please access the appropriate link for the board of education or contact St. Coletta's attendance counselor. The attendance counselor will be happy to discuss this and send parents/guardians a copy of the applicable policy. When a student reaches six unexcused tardies within a semester, the family will be contacted by letter notifying them of the number of unexcused tardies. Additionally, an attendance meeting may be held.

District of Columbia:

- http://www.k12.dc.us/dcps/policies/policies_frame.html

Maryland:

- www.marylandpublicschools.org
- http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/nonpublicschools/nplegal/annotated_code/7_301.htm

Virginia:

- <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/studentguide.pdf>
- <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/superintendent/attendance.php>
- www.fcps.edu

Can I take my child out of school for a vacation?

St. Coletta is an 11-month program and students are expected to be in attendance for the whole school year. Vacation time is considered an unexcused absence, and as required by the jurisdiction will be reported as such. Please remember that children who attend St. Coletta are those generally requiring ESY. If your child has unexcused absences, the need for an extended program such as St. Coletta must be reviewed.

Does my child need a physical exam before he or she can attend the school?

District of Columbia regulations require that a physical and dental exam and a current record of immunization be on file for each student and each year thereafter. St. Coletta may require more frequent physical exams for children with serious health and medication issues. A Tuberculosis and Lead Risk Exposure Risk Assessment are also required yearly as part of the physical exam. Students without current immunizations or exams may be excluded from school.

What happens in the event of inclement weather?

St. Coletta School will follow the District of Columbia Public Schools' snow closings. On snowy days, please listen to the radio or TV. If the District schools are closed, St. Coletta is closed; if they open late, St. Coletta opens late. In the event that school must be closed early, teachers will notify the parents or guardians. Day care will not be provided on late opening or early release days under this policy. Please note that although St. Coletta may be open during inclement weather, your jurisdiction may close and choose not to transport your child. When this situation occurs, you are welcome to bring your child to school and pick him or her up from school.

My child takes medication. How are medications administered?

All medication, both prescription and over-the-counter (Tylenol, cough drops, etc.), must be in the original container accompanied by an Authorization of Administration of Medication form. The form must be signed by the physician and the parent/guardian, and is required for all medicines administered at school. Medicines must not be transported to school by the student, nor by the bus driver. Medications may only be brought by the parent or guardian or sent through the mail. The school needs to know what additional medications are administered in the home, in the event an emergency occurs during school hours. Medication procedures are overseen by the school nurse. Individual medications can be administered by staff who are medication trained. If a student requires a nursing procedure such as g-tube feedings or suctioning, an Authorization for Specific Health Assistance form is required from the health care provider. In addition, parent/guardian permission is required in writing to apply sunscreen or any other lotion to a child.

Are meals provided?

St. Coletta School stresses healthy meals and snacks. All students receive hot lunches (multiple choices are available) which are prepared daily in a USDA-approved kitchen (included in tuition). Students are also provided with snacks and breakfast on an as-needed basis. As all meals and snacks are provided and since many of our students have specific food allergies, students are not to bring their own food or drink to school. This includes all bottled drinks or packaged snacks. Students on special dietary restrictions must have permission from the school and a doctor's order specifying the nature of the medical necessity in order to bring their own lunches. Students age 16-22 prepare their own lunches and meals as part of their educational program.

How is student behavior managed?

It is the philosophy of St. Coletta School to foster productive student behavior. Toward this goal, staff are expected to provide: clear rules for student conduct; collegiality among staff members; a pervasive caring for students; effective instruction; and a focus on providing positive reinforcement and options for students.

Effective methods for responding to disruptive student behavior include:

- Using positive redirection and reinforcement whenever appropriate.
- Developing positive personal relationships with students that indicate high teacher expectations and respect for students.
- Closely monitoring performance and behavior.
- Using brief, non-disruptive interventions.
- Handling conflicts calmly and avoiding engaging in power struggles.
- Clarifying students' choices so that options are clear and students are responsible for the consequences of their choices.
- Using effective listening skills to help students identify problems and gain insight.

When students exhibit serious behavioral difficulties, a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) may need to be developed. The development process should include the multidisciplinary team involved with the student and the following six steps:

- Attempt to determine the function (s) of the behavior through an FBA;
- Focus on one or two specific student behaviors that need to change in order for the student to have a successful school experience;
- Determine specific interventions to bring about these changes;
- Assign responsibility to staff for implementing each intervention;
- Determine the data to be collected to test the effectiveness of the intervention; and,
- Review the program at a minimum annually, or as determined by the IEP team.

Copies of the FBA and BIP are discussed with and given to parents/guardians and affected staff. A copy is placed in the student's record.

St. Coletta staff members are trained in the Mandt system of passive restraint. Only trained staff members are allowed to intervene using this system. The Mandt system involves the use of many interventions. Physical intervention is used only as a matter of last resort when someone is a danger to themselves or others. Parents must be notified if a restraint is utilized and a behavior plan must be developed.

There are Quiet Rooms at St. Coletta that are available for students to use if they need to calm themselves. These rooms are unlocked and students are never left alone. Use of the Quiet Room requires that an administrator be notified, an incident report be written and the parent notified. St. Coletta policy prohibits the use of mechanical restraints.

The St. Coletta School Behavior Management Plan **strictly prohibits**:

- Deprivation of drinking water or food necessary to meet daily nutritional needs.
- Denial of the use of toilet facilities.
- Any action humiliating, degrading or abusive.
- Deprivation of health care including counseling.
- Intrusive aversive therapy.
- Use of mechanical restraints or seclusion.

Corporal punishment will never be administered by any staff person. If abuse or neglect is suspected, the school will contact Child Protective Services (CPS). Before CPS comes, a parent/guardian must be notified. If the parent/guardian objects, the child will not be interviewed. This does not apply if the parent/guardian is the suspect. In such a case, CPS may interview the child without consent from the parent or guardian.

What is St. Coletta School's policy on student suspension?

While St. Coletta School is dedicated to serving students with challenging behaviors by providing intensive behavior supports, there may be incidents where suspension is deemed necessary. This includes, but is not limited to: drug and/or weapon possession, incidents that may result in serious bodily injury, and other incidents of such nature in which it is felt the safety of the student and others is at risk. Dependent on the seriousness of the offense and/or danger to others, outside authorities may also be contacted. Further disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, may be considered. Parents will be notified via certified mail and phone of this decision within 24 hours of the suspension.

If suspension equals ten consecutive or cumulative days over the school year, then a Manifest Determination IEP meeting must be held. A Manifest Determination Meeting, per DCPS and other jurisdictional regulations, will be scheduled within ten days to determine if the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability. Depending upon the outcome of this meeting, the recommendations of the IEP team will be implemented.

My child has difficult behaviors. Can he/she be terminated because of them?

Although St. Coletta is committed to serving difficult-to-place children, there are times when we feel we cannot provide the intensity of service that a child requires. An IEP to discuss placement would be held in these circumstances and our recommendations of such would be made. DCPS or other jurisdictions would then provide alternate placement options. In terms of day-to-day behavior difficulties, we are dedicated to providing students the needed supports and will not call to have them picked up or sent home unless we feel it is a medical or safety necessity.

What is the school's weapons/drug policy?

Any student who brings a weapon or an object that could be used as a weapon to school, brings drugs to school, or is involved in a situation that causes serious bodily injury can be suspended immediately. Depending upon the seriousness of the offense or the danger to others, outside authorities may be called. Further disciplinary action as noted under the student suspension policy section will be followed.

Does the school have an emergency preparedness plan?

St Coletta staff has a safety plan to be implemented in the event of a chemical or biological attack. As those of you who were here for September 11 know, that situation, though totally unexpected, was handled with efficiency and sensitivity to the needs of the children. If a terrorist action should materialize, we will immediately go into a lockdown mode. This means that parents and guardians should not come to the school, but should wait by the phone. St. Coletta has cell phones and will use them in the event of service interruption. If you have a cell phone number that we do not have, please call the office and give it to us. The building occupied by St. Coletta has windows that are sealed. In case of a biological or chemical event, we would shut down our air handlers and close off the ventilation systems to the best of our ability. There are emergency switches for that purpose and we know where they are and how to use them. We will not open the doors to anyone except official security or police personnel since to do so would compromise the air in the building.

Regarding transportation: Though this is largely in the hands of the local school jurisdictions, we have communicated to them our suggestions. If buses, taxis and vans are in route and close to the school, students will be delivered to the school. If transportation has recently departed the school with students, they will return students to the school. If buses, taxis or vans are close to students' homes for pick-up in morning or delivery in afternoon, students will be taken to their home. If students are at a career-based training site and the event is chemical or biological they will have to remain there with the staff that accompanied them. We will work with employers to discuss their safety procedures. If the event is not chemical or biological, students will be retrieved from training sites and brought back to St. Coletta. Parents and guardians will be notified when it is safe to come and get their children. No one should come before they are notified. Emergency water and food supplies are stocked in the building. There will be enough food and water to last three to four days.

In the event of an emergency or crisis-related event, St. Coletta will send a text message to parents notifying them of the emergency. In order to receive this message, a cell phone number and cell phone provider (i.e. AT & T, Verizon, etc) must be provided by the parent/guardian to the school. If

I have to work and cannot afford babysitters. Why can't I send my child to school when he is sick?

Health regulations require that a child with a contagious illness, a severe cold, sore throat or cough, or who has a badly upset stomach must be kept home. A child with a fever must be kept at home for 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal. The office should be immediately informed regarding a child who has a contagious illness or infection. Parents and/or guardians will be called if a child exhibits any of the above symptoms or if the administrator believes the child is sick and should not be at school. Parents and/or guardians should make arrangements to pick students up as soon as possible if and when they become ill.

Since the staff members know my child so well and it's hard to find baby-sitters for special-needs kids, can teachers and assistants help me at home?

Due to the family atmosphere fostered at St. Coletta and the needs of the students, the staff may become well-acquainted with the parents and guardians. While such relationships are wholly acceptable, and are in fact necessary to successful education, professional integrity and confidentiality must be maintained at all times. In keeping with this standard, staff may not baby-sit, provide respite care, or transport students for pay in their own vehicles. All communication regarding the student is relayed through your child's teacher or related service provider working with your child.

Who is allowed to see my child's records?

All data in your child's educational record is available for parents' and guardians' inspection and review. Parents/Guardians have the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's scholastic records within a reasonable period, but not to exceed 45 days from the day the school receives a request for access.
- An explanation and interpretation of records.
- Copies of records and names of people who have seen the records.
- Give or withhold consent to other people seeing their child's records.
- Request destruction of records which are no longer needed.
- Request that information be amended that is inaccurate, misleading or violates privacy or rights.
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1993) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (1996).
- Review only records pertaining to their child.

No one else, other than authorized school personnel, may review the student's records without a Release of Information form signed by the parent or guardian.

What about photographs?

St. Coletta School does not take or release photographs of its students without permission from the parent or guardian. However, sometimes pictures are needed for school publicity or for academic purposes. A photographic release form is provided for this purpose.

What is the school's policy on cell phones?

The use of cell phones is not allowed during normal school hours. If you need to contact your child, please call the main office and they will be notified. If there are needed exceptions, parents/guardians must obtain these exceptions from the assistant principal. These exceptions may include students who participate in our Independent Work and Travel Program as indicated on their IEP or appropriate permission forms. At all times during the school day, student phones should be turned off and put away. If a student continuously disregards school policy on personal cell phone use, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, teacher and school administrator as necessary.

Can I learn about the qualifications of my child’s teacher?

In accordance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB), a parent/guardian may inquire about the qualifications of their child’s teacher at any time. All inquires may be directed to either Christie Mandeville/Assistant Principal or Katherine Chandler/Assistant Principal.

How will the school inform the parents about the State Education Agency Complaint Resolution Policy?

St. Coletta will send a copy of the District of Columbia State Education Agency No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Complaint Resolution Policy to families yearly as part of the back-to-school packet.

Is there a dress code?

Clothing should be safe, comfortable and not restrictive to learning activities. Sneakers are much safer than sandals. Construction/hiking type boots are not allowed as they not only impede mobility but also because serious injury/property damage can occur if a student kicks someone or something. Clothing should be free of loose strings around the neck or other items that could cause injury during active play; this includes, but is not limited to heavy chains worn as either necklaces, belts, or hanging from belt loops. Undergarments should be worn at all times and students should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Short shorts, halter tops and low-cut blouses are not acceptable for school. In the event your child needs a change of clothing, it is requested that you send an extra pair of clothing to school (labeled with your student’s name), including underwear.

Will my child go on school-based outings?

One of the primary components of the St. Coletta program is community-based instruction. Included in the back-to-school packet is a Neighborhood Community Based Instruction (CBI) Permission Form. This form is intended for a select group of commonly visited sites that are a regular part of the day-to-day school programming. For any other CBI outings , a separate permission form will be sent home and must be signed and returned to the teacher in order for the student to participate in that CBI. If parents/guardians do not sign the CBI form, their child will not be included on the outing. Verbal permission will not be accepted

How is the school run and funded?

OPERATIONS

St. Coletta of Greater Washington Inc. is the not for profit corporation that operates the St. Coletta Special Education Public Charter School, the St. Coletta Private School, and the St. Coletta Adult Day Support (Alexandria, VA and Rockville, MD) program which also includes the Woodmont Weavers (Ballston Commons Mall, Arlington, VA). The officers and trustees of the Corporation and the Charter School have complete legal authority and jurisdiction over these respective endeavors. The Chief Executive Officer carries out the policies of the Trustees and is responsible for the overall operations of St. Coletta of Greater Washington.

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

Charitable Contributions are essential to sustain the quality of services at St. Coletta School because tuition and fees cover only a portion of the cost needed to meet the needs of each child in our care. Each year we must raise approximately \$500,000 to meet our general operating expenses. Achieving this goal requires the support of foundations, corporations, organizations and hundreds of individuals in the metropolitan area. Contributions allow us to bring special services such as community based instruction, participation in Special Olympics, adaptive equipment in Assistive Technology, arts programs and field trips to our children and young adults.

St Coletta invites and appreciates your support, You may make a contribution by contacting the Development Office or through designations made to the United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns — St. Coletta' designation number is **8969**.

More Questions?

Please call the office at 202-350-8680.

St. Coletta of Greater Washington admits students and clients of any race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender or age to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to or made available to students and clients at St. Coletta. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, age or veteran's status in educational programs or in other school-administered activities. St. Coletta does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, age, disability or veteran's status with regard to employment.

School employees are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services.

*Handbook Revised April 2009
Handbook Available on line at www.stcoletta.org and is subject to revision*

Parent Handbook

2009—2010



St. Coletta School
1901 Independence Avenue, SE
Washington, DC , 20003

you also wish to receive the message via email, you must provide an email address. This text message system will only be used in the event of an unusual emergency and not for day-to-day communication or weather-related events. As you are well aware, there are no guarantees in these situations and we will all do whatever we can to insure the safety of everyone involved.

Who is allowed to see my child's records?

All data in your child's educational record is available for parents' and guardians' inspection and review.

Parents/Guardians have the right to:

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- Copies of records and names of people who have seen the records.
- Give or withhold consent to other people seeing their child's records.
- Request destruction of records which are no longer needed.
- Request that information be amended that is inaccurate, misleading or violates privacy or rights.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
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No one else, other than authorized school personnel, may review the student's records without a Release of Information form signed by the parent or guardian.

What about photographs?

St. Coletta School does not take or release photographs of its students without permission from the parent or guardian. However, sometimes pictures are needed for school publicity or for academic purposes. A photographic release form is provided for this purpose.

What is the schools policy on cell phones?

The use of cell phones is discouraged at school. If you need to contact your child, please call the office at (703) 683-3686. If your child needs a cell phone for emergency use coming to and from school each day, please contact us regarding this matter

How is the school run and funded?

OPERATIONS

St. Coletta of Greater Washington, Inc. is the non-profit corporation which operates the St. Coletta School. The officers and trustees of the Corporation have complete legal authority and

jurisdiction over the School, its Executive Director, staff and faculty. In actual operation, the Executive Director of the school carries out the policies set by the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director reports through the President of the Board of Trustees and directly to the Corporation four times per year.

Parents/Guardians are a vital part of the Board of Trustees, once a year parents/guardians elect an official representative to the Board. Other interested parents/guardians may join the Board through the regular nomination process. For more information, contact the school office.

