

# **Employee Handbook**

## **Section IX: Teacher Support and Evaluation**

- A. Inter-Grade Meetings
- B. Mentoring
  - 1. Purpose of the Mentoring Program
  - 2. Role of Participating Mentor
  - 3. Responsibility of the Mentee
- C. Support Meetings
- D. Chapel Prep
- E. Professional Development
  - 1. Approval
  - 2. Registration and Payment
  - 3. Mileage Reimbursement
- F. Curriculum Maps
- G. Evaluation and Growth
  - 1. Essential Expectations
    - Administrators
    - Staff Members
    - Teachers
    - Assistant Teachers
  - 2. Growth and Renewal Plan
    - Administrators
    - Teachers
  - 3. Ongoing Support
- H. Faculty Meetings

# **Employee Handbook**

## **Section IX: Teacher Support and Evaluation**

### **A. Inter-Grade Meetings**

Before the school year begins, an important component of the pre-opening Faculty Workdays is the time set aside for inter-grade teacher information exchanges. At these meetings, teachers discuss special student needs and share information about student math and reading group placement. Every Head Teacher, under the direction of the Assistant Head of School, meets with the classroom teacher from the previous year to review students' academic social/ emotional development, discuss reading and math groupings, as well as share effective instructional strategies to continue for individual students. Most of this information is also available in the Class File Box.

### **B. Mentoring**

The mission of St. Thomas's Day School is to help ease a new teacher's transition to work and life in our school as well as to initiate new interactions with established faculty with the intention of encouraging professional networking, information sharing, friendships, and community at STTS.

#### **1. Purpose of the Mentoring Program**

The program is designed to support and orient new faculty and staff employed at St. Thomas's Day School with the school's professional community. The program is designed to link a new faculty member or "mentee" with a senior "Master Teacher" during the new teacher's early employment period. Through participation in the program, new faculty will have opportunities to interact with a wider circle of teachers (new and experienced), and has the support of the school administration. The administration is responsible for selecting the members of the Mentoring Committee. Mentors are responsible for supporting and orienting their designated "mentee" about the school's mission, program, procedures, and culture.

More specifically, the program is designed to

- Initiate interaction among new and established teachers
- Help new teachers transition to STTS academic and professional life
- Offer opportunities for teacher leadership
- Inspire the development of friendship and community
- Foster peer networking that can lead to professional development opportunities
- Encourage teacher involvement in school and community events

#### **2. Role of Participating Mentor**

The responsibilities of the mentor are multifaceted and oriented around providing support. The mentor takes on the responsibility of providing the support of an experienced teacher who has faced the same challenges in the past.

- Welcome new teachers into the STTS community
- Contact mentee before classes commence
- Meet mentee during first week of classes
- Attend organized social events (Faculty/Staff Dinner, etc.)
- Make regular contact with your mentee around 1 time/week at beginning of term (in person). Contact may become less frequent throughout term.
- Provide additional professional/community support
- Share information and knowledge gained by experience as a teacher at STTS

- May become a contact for professional networking
- Review the school's mission, contract, job responsibilities, calendar, Faculty Handbook and St. Thomas's Day School Directory and Handbook.
- Help new staff member understand the levels of professional behavior expected from faculty and staff at the school, e.g., gossip of any kind is not acceptable behavior; Teachers should be respectful of families, students, and other faculty and staff and should refrain from and avoid discussions of a negative nature especially in the faculty room and school hallways; Non- judgmental attitudes are encouraged; We aim to have a wide window of acceptance regarding community members on all levels (personal, academic, social, political); Discussions will also include staff development opportunities in and out of the school to enhance professional skills, techniques, and content.

### **3. Responsibility of the Mentee**

Mentoring is a partnership and therefore the mentees have responsibilities as well. The mentor-mentee relationship is an independent undertaking by each mentor match. Some mentorships may focus on academics while others might be primarily social. Please strike a healthy balance when considering your mentoring relationship.

- Contact mentor before first week of class
- Meet with mentor in person during first week of classes
- Keep in touch with mentor once a week, in person, throughout the semester
- Attend STTS social events

### **C. Support Meetings**

New Teachers meet with the Administration for support in their teaching on a weekly basis. Second and Third-year teachers meet for support in their teaching on a bi-weekly basis. Experienced Teachers meet with the Administration on a monthly basis. The agenda for these meetings is derived from information included in the Head and Special Teacher's planning maps. Teachers should feel free to bring questions or concerns they wish to discuss to the meeting.

### **D. Chapel Prep**

To foster collaborative and provide teaching support and guidance, each Head Teacher is given time during Chapel to work with a teacher in another grade. Chapel Preps typically happen once a week, although on occasion, depending on the year, a teacher may have more than one Chapel Prep. The time is designated to allow teaching teams to plan and work collaboratively, as well as to provide planning time for instructional/student support. Coverage for classes is arranged by the Assistant Head of School. A schedule will be distributed at the beginning of the year. Chapel Prep does not happen during the following special Chapels: Veterans Day Chapel, Grandparent/Special Friends Day, Christmas Chapel, Earth Day Chapel, Martin Luther King Day Chapel, Class Day, and Graduation. On those days, all staff members are required to attend Chapel. If the person assigned to cover Chapel is absent, the Head Teacher is responsible for attending Chapel that day.

### **E. Professional Development**

St Thomas's Day School is committed to creating a professional learning community that supports continual growth and renewal. Teachers are expected to attend professional workshops, seminars, school visitations, summer institutes sponsored by CAIS, and workshops presented by regional and local professional organizations in an attempt to improve their teaching skills and stay current on trends/ standards in the field of education. All Professional

Development opportunities must be approved by the Head of School using the following procedure:

### **1. Approval**

The Head of School and/or the Assistant Head of School will make recommendations to teachers about attending conferences or workshops. In addition, teachers may make requests to attend conferences as well. Before attending professional development workshops, teachers must submit a Request for Professional Development Activity form (found on the Faculty Intranet on the school website) to the Head of School for approval.

### **2. Registration and Payment**

Upon receipt of the signed Professional Activity Form, the Business Office will register teachers for professional development. The Assistant Head of School will obtain a substitute if the professional development offering is during the school day and interferes with teaching responsibilities. The school is responsible for paying for all costs associated with approved staff development experiences.

### **3. Mileage Reimbursement**

The current rate per mile (as published by the IRS) will be reimbursed to employees who use their car for official school related activities, e.g.: conferences, PPT, etc.

## **F. Curriculum Maps**

Twice a year, all teachers are asked to submit Curriculum Maps to the Head of School and the Assistant Head of School. The Curriculum Maps are an overview of all curriculum being taught in the classroom and require teachers to provide information on Essential Questions, Content, Skills, Assessment, Resources, Field Trips/ Activities, and Groups for each curriculum area. Each curriculum spans a semester and includes several months of content. In addition to the columns of information, the map requires information on how the curriculum was integrated with other subjects, any special needs of the group, and the social/emotional state of the group. A blank curriculum map can be found in the Faculty Intranet or on the Team Drive entitled Curriculum.

## **G. Evaluation/ Growth and Renewal Framework**

The St. Thomas's Day School Evaluation/ Growth and Renewal Framework includes two parts: Evaluation and the Growth and Renewal Framework. The evaluation portion of the framework is designed to be a basic measure of performance and ensures that all employees are meeting the expectations for behavior as an employee at St. Thomas's Day School. Once an administrator or teacher has demonstrated the he/she is meeting basic expectations, he/she moves on to the Growth and Renewal portion of the framework. The Growth and Renewal program is intended to provide a framework and support around your professional development efforts—helping you explore new ideas about teaching and gaining new insights into your subject area, and doing so in a way that is meaningful, exciting, and energizing for you.

### **1. Evaluation**

The evaluation system at St. Thomas's Day School was created and implemented with a focus on growth and professional development at the forefront. Administrators, staff members, teachers and assistant teachers are encouraged to pursue lifelong learning, improve pedagogical skills, learn and practice new strategies or techniques, and keep pace with the ever-broadening professional changes and demands. The evaluation system is based on a series of essential expectations that define basic behaviors expected of all

employees at St. Thomas's Day School. Evaluations for administrators, staff members, teachers and assistant teachers can be found on the Faculty Intranet.

## **2. Growth and Renewal Plan**

The primary purpose of the Growth and Renewal Framework at St. Thomas's Day School is to promote personal and professional growth that leads to improved teaching performance. The Head of School and/or the Assistant Head of School act as facilitators for each teacher, just as a teacher serves as a facilitator for students in the classroom. The teacher growth and evaluation framework is an ongoing process and is used to define common expectations for effective teaching practice, to facilitate conversations about instruction, and to promote self-awareness in teachers and administrators about their own abilities. Growth and Renewal Plans for administrators and teachers can be found on the Faculty Intranet.

## **3. Ongoing Support**

Teachers are supported by the administration as they work on their Growth and Renewal Plan. Teacher support meetings, the mentoring program, Chapel Preps, Inter-Grade Meetings and ongoing classroom observations are all part of the growth and evaluation process. Teacher accountability is maintained by the ongoing dialogue about theory and practice between Teachers, the Head of School, and the Assistant Head of School.

## **H. Faculty Meetings**

Faculty meetings take place every Tuesday afternoon from 3:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. unless teachers are notified to the contrary. Faculty meetings are designed to enhance professional skills, to disperse information pertaining to the school, and to foster a collegial environment.